RAJARSHI SHAHU CHHATRAPATI AND THE BRITISH PARAMOUNT POWER IN INDIA

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO

SHIVAJI UNIVERSITY, KOLHAPUR

FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

HISTORY

UNDER THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

BY

MANJUSHRI JAYSINGRAO PAWAR

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF

PROF. DR. ARUN BHOSALE

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
SHIVAJI UNIVERSITY
KOLHAPUR – 416004

SEPTEMBER 2008

Professor & Head
Department of History
Shivaji University,
Kolhapur - 416 004.

SOK-2496-TD15259

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled 'Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati and the British Paramount Power In India' completed and written by me has not previously formed the basis for the award of any Degree or Diploma or other similar title of this or any other University or examining body.

Place : Kolhapur
Date : 29-9-08

Manjushri J. Pawar
(Research Student)

CERTIFICATE

This is to Certify that the thesis entitled 'Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati And The British Paramount Power In India' which is being submitted herewith for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History of Shivaji University, Kolhapur, is the result of the original research work completed by Miss Manjushri Jaysingrao Pawar, under my supervision and guidance and to the best of my knowledge and belief the work embodied in this thesis has not formed earlier the basis for the award of any degree or similar title of this or any other University or examining body.

Place : Kolhapur
Date : 29-9-2008

Prof. Dr. Arun Bhosale
(Research Guide)

DEDICATED TO

My beloved father,

In whose veins the passion for research flows

& whose very existence has been

'My Source of Inspiration.'

DR. JAYSINGRAO PAWAR

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It gives me immense pleasure to express my deep sense of gratitude to all those who stood with me through this rigorous intellectual journey of my research.

My eternal gratitude to my guide Prof. Dr. Arun Bhosale, a veteran scholar in Modern Indian History who guided me to the proper direction at every stage of my work. I am greatly benefited by his critical acumen and scholarly insight from the very inception of the thesis to its final culmination.

I am thankful to my teachers in the Dept. of History, Shivaji University, Prof M.A Lohar, Head of the Dept. Prof. M.P Patil, Dr Nanda Parekar, Dr. P. A. Patil, who have encouraged me during my research.

I am thankful to Dr. Sunilkumar Lavate whose words of encouragement and monitoring with love enabled me to cross hurdles. This work would not have ever been possible without the affection and support lent to me by my well wishers Adv. Govind Pansare, Dr. Pradeep Pawar and Prin. Dr. T.S. Patil. My longstanding association with them has been a rewarding experience which I would like to cherish long. I would prefer to remain in their debt.

I am indeed very grateful to my friends Dr. Avanish Patil, Dr. Umesh Kadam and Megha Pansare whose involvement not only encouraged me but also helped me in finding source materials.

I am grateful to Dr. Bhaskar Dhatavkar, Director, Bombay Archives for allowing me an easy access to the precious records. My thanks are also due to his colleague Shri. Ganesh Khodake at the Kolhapur State Record Office.

My special thanks to Shri. Vijayrao Shinde and Dr. Bapusaheb Mane for helping me to reach out to the unpublished documents and the supplementary material for my research work. My thanks are also due to Shri. Uday Khedkar, Clerk, Dept. of History and the Peon Shri Sunil Londhe who helped me out in the tedious administrative procedures unconditionally.

My thanks to Mrs. Tejaswini and Abhijeet Bhosale, an industrious couple who carried out the arduous task of DTP.

It would be very formal to thank my family members my sister Arundhati, my brother-in-law Rajendra Patil and my brothers Prithviraj and Nishant. Though the silent companions in my journey, their unfailing support has always been my source of strength.

Last but not the least, how can I forget my dear loving Mother Mrs. Vasudha Pawar whose very existence along with my father is my source of inspiration. She always has encouraged me to pursue my research without imposing any of the family responsibilities. The present work is the outcome of her long standing support, love, and care for me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abbreviation

Introduction 1-2

Chapter One: The British Paramountcy and The Indian Native States 3-17

- The Evolution of British Paramountcy.
- The Ring Fenced Policy.
- The Policy of Subordinate Isolation
- The Policy of Subordinate Union.
- 'One Charge' Theory of Lord Canning
- Doctrine of Interference
- Consolidation of the British Paramountcy
- Revival of Prestige of the Princes
- The Paramountcy at its Pinnacle
- The Laissez faire Policy
- Towards the Chamber of Princes
- Establishment of Chamber of Princes

Chapter Two : Kolhapur Chhatrapati – British Relations, Pre-Shahu Era, (1765-1894) 18-48

- First Clash and First Treaty
- Second and Third Treaties
- Buasaheb and the Fourth Treaty
- Episode of Baby-Elephant and Fifth Treaty
- Reeves Recommendations of Administrative Reforms.
- Revolt of 1844 and Its Aftermath
- Revolt of 1857 and Its Aftermath
- The treaty of 1862
- The Reign of Chhatrapati Babasaheb
- Chhatrapati Rajaram and the British (1866-1870)
- Chhatrapati Shivaji IV and the British (1871-1883)
- The Kolhapur Regent and the British
- Tragic death of Shivaji IV and Role of the British
- Shahu's Adoption and the British : 1884
- Shahu – British Relations Before the Installation.

Chapter Three : Consolidation of Shahu's Power 49-63

- Shahu's limitations and Odds
- Shahu's Proclamation
- History Repeats Itself

- Shahu's Appeal to the Government
- Shahu's Relations with the Political Agents
- Shahu honoured by Government
- Governor's visits to Kolhapur
- Consolidation of Administrative Power
- Famine and Plague
- Shahu and Wray Poison Case
- Shahu Faces the Case Courageously
- Mr. Brewin's Findings
- Shahu's Relations with British Officers

Chapter Four : The Controversy of Vedokta **64-72**

- The Beginning of the Vedokta
- The Vedokta Issue Aggravated
- Rajopadhye Watan Confiscated
- The British Support to Shahu
- Rajopadhye's Petitions Rejected
- Shahu Victorious in the End.

Chapter Five : Freedom Movement **73-107**

- Groups in Kolhapur Politics : (1894-1905)
- Shivaji Club : A Haven of Terrorists
- Tai Maharaj Case
- The Kolhapur Terrorists, Nationalists and British
- Shahu's Character Assassination
- Swadeshi Movement and Kolhapur State
- Increasing Activities of Terrorists
- Shahu's Measures Against Terrorists
- The Difference Between Revolutionary and Terrorist
- Home Rule Movement
- Shahu in British India
- Hostile Brahmin Press
- Non-Cooperation Movement
- Shivaji Memorial
- Shahu's Socalled Loyalty to the British Crown

Chapter Six : Shahu's Reflections on Native States and British Paramountcy **108-136**

- Kolhapur State and British Paramountcy
- Princes' Conference: October 1916
- Princes' Conference: November 1917

- Recruitment of Marathas in the Army
- Shahu on Home Rule
- Indian States and the British Government
- A Tribunal on the Lines of the Hague Tribunal
- Meeting with Montagu in February 1919
- The Bombay War Conference
- Shahu's Letter to Mr. Montagu
- The Princes' Conference : January 1919
- Shahu and S.M.C Chiefs
- Draft Constitution of Chamber of Princes
- Going Under the Government of India
- Conclusion

Chapter Seven : Social Reform Movements **137-165**

- Arya Samaj
- Shahu's Patronage to Arya Samaj
- Shahu Dreamt Arya Samaj as a World Religion
- Shahu, Arya Samaj and the British
- Shahu and the Satyashodhak Samaj
- Satyashodhak Samaj in Kolhapur
- The Tar Episode of 1914
- Royal Patronage to the Satya Samaj
- Shahu : Right Hand of Satya Samaj
- Why Shahu Openly Disowned Satyashodhak Movement
- Shahu- A Satyasamajist at Heart
- Shahu, Satyashodhak Samaj and British
- British Attitude Towards the Social Movement
- Shahu and Non-Brahmin Movement
- Background of Non-Brahmin Movement of 1917
- Shahu's Contribution to Non-Brahmin Movement
- Shahu Communal Representation and The British
- End of the First Phase of Non-Brahmin Movement
- Abolition of Kulkarni Watan and The Revival of Brahmin Activities

Chapter Eight : Conclusions **166-173**

Bibliography **174-177**

Abbreviations

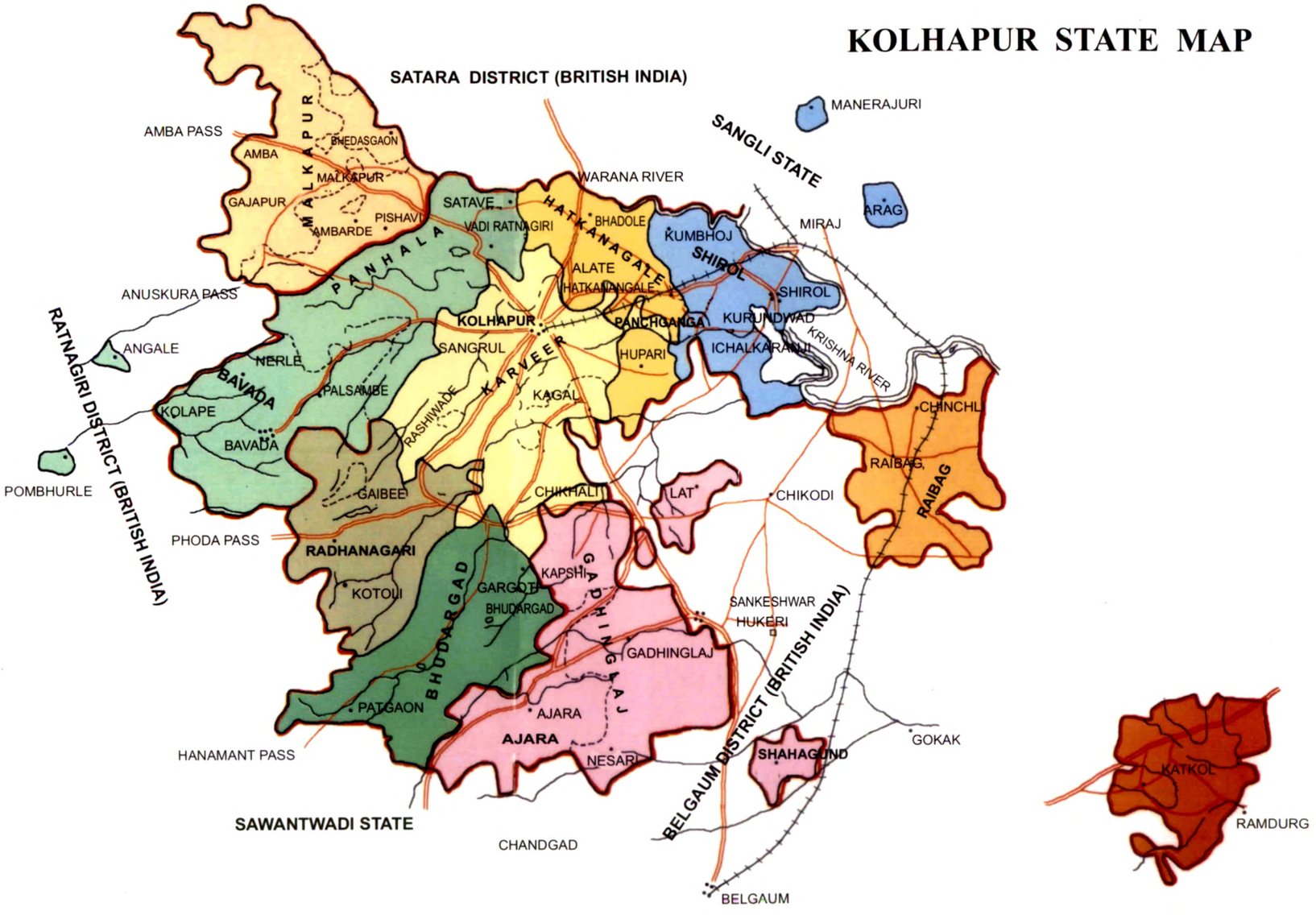
BPIR	-	British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance
BPIS	-	British Policy Towards The Indian States
BRAC	-	Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar Charitra
BRIA	-	British Rule In India And After
BRIP	-	The British Raj and the Indian Princes
CHI	-	The Cambridge History of India
CK	-	Chhatrapatis Of Kolhapur,
CSMP	-	Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharajanchi Patre
CWMJP	-	Collected Works of Mahatma Jotirao Phule
DRK	-	Diary of the Rajah of Kolhapur
EBP	-	The Evolution of British Policy Towards Indian States
HKGBL	-	Hanterkar Khanderao Gopalrao Bagal Yanche Nivdak Lekh
JK	-	Jijabaikalin Kagadpatre
KIA	-	The Kings and Indian Allies, The Raja and Their India
KR	-	Karveer Riyasat
LTYC	-	Lokmanya Tilak Yanche Charitra
MJP	-	Mahatma Jyotirao Phule,
MPSV	-	Mahatma Phule Samagra Vangmay
MSSC	-	Memoirs of H.H. Shri Shahu Chhatrapti Maharaja of Kolhapur
NSI	-	The Native States of India
OED	-	The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary On Historical Principles
PPI	-	The Protected Princes of India
PIEE	-	The Princes of India in the Endgame of Empire
REV	-	Rajarshi – Ek Vyaktidarshan
RSC	-	Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati
RSCA	-	Rajarshi ShriShahu Chhatrapati Yanche Antarang
RSCP Vol. I-IX	-	Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati Papers,
RSCV	-	Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati : Vad ani Vastav
RSMB	-	Rajarshi ShriShahu Maharajanchi Bhashane,
RSSG	-	Rajarshi Shahu Smarak Granth
SCL	-	Shahu Chhatrapati aani Lokmanya
SCNA Vol. I-II	-	Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapatinche Nivadak Adesh
SCRR	-	Shahu Chhatrapati a Royal Revolutionary
SFF	-	Struggle for Freedom
SIH	-	Studies in Indian History
SKV	-	Samagra Kelkar Vandmay
SMMCV	-	Shree Madanmohan Malaviya Commomerative Volume
SRPK	-	Statistical Report on the Principality of Kolhapur
SSM	-	Shrimtchhatrapati Shahu Maharaj Yanche Charitra
TA	-	Treaties And Agreements Concluded Between The British

		Government And The Kolhapur State Since The Year 1766 A.D. And Kharitas Bearing On The Subjects
TI	-	The Times of India
VSM	-	Visavya Shatakatil Maharashtra
WUD	-	Webster Universal Dictionary

Shahu's Royal Emblem

British Crown

Chh. Shahu Maharaj, England, 1902


KOLHAPUR STATE MAP
SATARA DISTRICT (BRITISH INDIA)
MANERAJURI
SANGLI STATE
AMBA PASS
BHEDASGAON
AMBA
MALKAPUR
MALKAPUR
GAJAPUR
PISHAVI
AMBARDE
SATAVE
WARANA RIVER
VADI RATNAGIRI
BHADOLE
HATKANANGALE
ALATE
HATKANANGALE
KUMBHOJ
SHIROL
ARAG
MIRAJ
SHIROL
PANHALA
ANUSKURA PASS
KOLHAPUR
PANCHGANGA
KURUNDWAD
ICHALKARANJI
KRISHNA RIVER
ANGALE
SANGRUL
HUPARI
NERLE
BAVADA
PALSAMBE
KAGAL
KARVEER
KOLAPE
RASHIWADE
CHINCHLI
RATNAGIRI DISTRICT (BRITISH INDIA)
BAVADA
RAIBAG
RAIBAG
POMBHURLE
GAIBEE
CHIKHALI
LAT
CHIKODI
PHODA PASS
RADHANAGARI
KAPSHI
GADHINGLAJ
KOTOLI
GARGOTI
BHUDARGAD
SANKESHWAR
HUKERI
BHUDARGAD
GADHINGLAJ
PATGAON
AJARA
AJARA
NESARI
SHAHAGUND
GOKAK
HANAMANT PASS
BELGAUM DISTRICT (BRITISH INDIA)
KATKOL
SAWANTWADI STATE
CHANDGAD
RAMDURG
BELGAUM

Introduction

Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati, Maharaja of Kolhapur, (1874 – 1922) was a unique personality in India in general and in Maharashtra in particular. His historic work in the first two decades of the 20th century has earned for him a rare honour amongst the Princes of India of being the champion of downtrodden people in the country.

During the last two decades of the 19th century the enlightened Indians were preparing themselves to start a movement for political freedom, but they were reluctant to be liberal towards social reformist activities of a few individuals in the country. Against this background Shahu took the advantage of foreign power like the British to create social equality in his principality. While doing so he had to fight with oppressive people for securing social justice to the downtrodden. This was a firey ordeal for him. The British Government helped him safegard social interest in his mission.

Chh. Shahu's period was a very transformatory period in the political, social and cultural history of Modern Maharashtra. During his reign he had to administer his state under the British supremacy. While seeking the help of British, Shahu was cautious and alert about his self-esteem and patriotism. Hence, we find that during his rign from 1884 to 1922 his relations with British paramount power were full of political diplomacy and complexity.

The Kolhapur State was situated within the boundaries of the Bombay presidency. Out of 629 Indian states, 361 states were located in Bombay presidency. Janjira, Bhor, Savatwadi, Jamkhandi, Jath, Aundh, Akkalkot etc. were some of those States.

To understand the relations between Shahu as an Indian Prince and the British as the Paramount Power it is imperative to examine the British administrative policies during 1857 to 1922.

The Revolt of 1857 was considered to be a milestone in the British administrative policy. The major effect of this event was the transfer of power from the East India Company to the British Crown. The transfer of power in the name of Queen of England was to be done in a very tactful manner by avoiding the impression of vengeance after the of revolt 1857. This revolt led the British to reverse their policy towards the Indian States. Before 1857 they were seeking every opportunity to annex Princely States. But after 1858 the British Crown abandoned this policy. Because most of the Indian Princes had not only remined loyal to the British but had actively aided them in suppressing the revolt. So in 1858, the British Crown promised the Princes that their rights, dignity and honour would be maintained and that the policy of 'Doctrine of Lapse'would be abandoned thereafter.

The period from 1858 to the Morley-Minto reforms of 1909 was the golden age of British bureaucracy. The Indian Council Act of 1861 made Governor

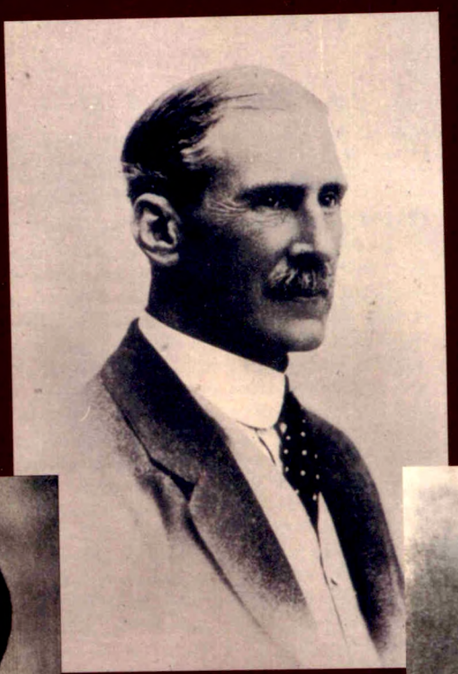
General's position more supreme and effective. Between 1861 to 1892 many Acts were passed. However they only served the purpose of increasing the legislative power internal and external of Governor-General and his council and decreasing power of the Indian Princes. Further-more the period between the Act of 1892 and the reforms of 1909 was full of political awakening in India. Hence with a view to preventing the storm of Indian patriotism the British power decided to use the Princely States as the firm props of British rule in India. It should be remembered that the secret cause behind the abandance of the policy of 'Doctrine of Lapse' was to preserve the Princely States as bulwarks of British Empire in India.

In the mid 19th century the British as the Paramount Power claimed the right to supervise the internal government of Princely States. They not only interfered in the day to day administration but took active interest in appointing and dismissing their ministers also. Sometimes the rulers were also removed or deprived of their powers, e.g. Chhatrapati Pratapsingh Maharaja of Satara and Malharrao Gaikwad of Badoda.

In 1899, Lord Curzon made it clear that henceforth the Indian Princess would rule their states as agents of the British Crown. And all the Princes of India had to accept the subordinate position under British paramountcy. Moreover, while playing the role of the subordinates of British power the Indian Princes had been obliged to work under the various treaties and agreements, with the British Power. On account of these treaties they had lost their final control over their internal administration. Therefore, most of the Princes had forgotten their duties towards their subjects and started living luxurious life, neglecting the social problems of their society. Against the backgound of these Nero-style Indian Princes, Chhatrapati Shahu, the Prince of Kolhapur, had accepted the British supremacy with a far sighted vision. He devoted his life to the cause of upliftment of the downtrodden masses and to maintaining social equality among his subjects, thereby raising the Kolhapur State to the status of a progressive state in India. At the end of his reign he stood forth as the idol of Indian Princes.

In the pre-Shahu period, the Kolhapur State unfortunately experienced a very long and painful period of almost 50 years of minority rule which had eventually reduced the state to the lowest ebb of its power and prestige. This was the state of things when Shahu Chhatrapati came to the Kolhapur Gadi in 1894.

In this proposed work, the main currents underlying the social and political policies of Shahu and those of the British Government have been analysed. Similarly Shahu's attitude towards freedom movement under the banner of the Indian National Congress and the secret organizations have been elucidated. An effort has been made to throw new light on Shahu's so called deep loyalty to the British Government, the much controversial subject in his lifetime and even thereafter. This is a special study of Shahu's life and work from a different point of view which has remained much unexplored so far.

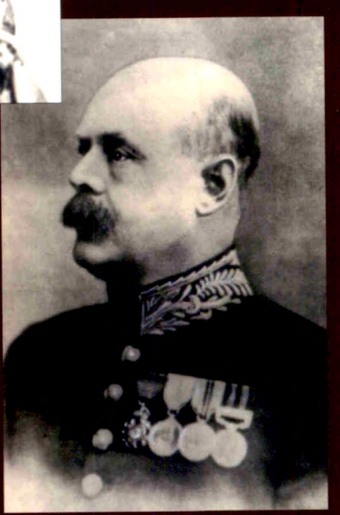


Sir S. M. Fraser

Col. W. B. Ferris

Sir Claude Hill

Lord Willingdon



Col. J. W. B. Wodehouse

Chh. Shivaji III Alias Babasaheb Maharaj

Chh. Chimasaheb

Chh. Rajaram Maharaj

Chh. Shvaji IV

Chh. Shahu Maharaj at 12, at Rajkot

Installation of Shahu

Shahu, Lord Harris, Lady Harris & Other British Officers
at the time of Installation

Chapter I

The British Paramountcy and the Indian Native States

It would be instructive to note at the outset of this chapter, the meaning and scope of the terms 'Paramountcy' and 'Native State'. The internationally standard dictionaries like Webster Universal Dictionary define 'Paramountcy' as 'The quality of being Paramount' or 'The condition of being Paramount'. Now the question that emerges is 'what is 'Paramount'? Paramount means 'Having supreme authority of jurisdiction'[1] or 'Above all others in rank, order or jurisdiction.'[2]

The British Paramountcy in India obviously connotes that the British had established such a power in India which was exercising supreme authority or jurisdiction over the Indian Native States, or which was above all other States in India in rank, order and jurisdiction.

What is the Native State ? Sir William Lee-Warner, a British Political Officer and a well known authority on the British Paramountcy over the Indian Natives, very well defines the nature of 'Native States' in India. He says, "A Native State is a political community, occupying a territory in India of defined boundaries and subject to a common and responsible ruler, who has, as a matter of fact, enjoyed and exercised, with sanction of the British Government, any of the functions and attributes of internal sovereignty. The indivisibility of sovereignty does not belong to the Indian system of sovereign States."

Sir Lee- Warner goes on elucidating the nature and the limits of the sovereignty enjoyed by the Indian Native States, "No Native State in the interior of India enjoys the full attributes of complete external and internal sovereignty, since none is left either the power of declaring war or peace or the right of negotiating agreements with other States, but sovereignty of the Native State is shared between the British Government and the chiefs in varying degrees. Some States enjoy substantial immunity from interference in nearly all functions of internal administration, while others are under such subjections that the Native sovereignty is almost completely destroyed."[3]

The Evolution of British Paramountcy

Before dealing with the relations between the Kolhapur State and the British Paramountcy, it is imperative to know how the British established their Paramount Power in India and what was the nature of that Paramountcy. It should be noted at the outset that the establishment of the British Paramountcy was a product of gradual political and military activities of the British in the 18th and 19th centuries and it took several decades to acquire its final shape. An official announcement in days of Lord Lytton aptly says, "Paramountcy is a thing of gradual growth... shaped partly by conquest, partly by treaty and partly by usuage"[4]

Sir William Lee-Warner, in his treatise on, 'The Native States of India' has phased out the three stages of the British relations with the Indian States. They are as follows :

1. The Ring Fence Policy : 1757 To 1813
2. The Policy of Subordinate Isolation : 1813 To 1857
3. The Policy of Subordinate Union : 1857 onwords.

The Ring Fenced Policy

The Battle of Plassey in 1757 laid the foundation of the British Empire in India. By then, the British had already surpassed the Portuguese and the French in their scramble for India and acquired a status of No. 1 European Power in India. At the end of the 18th century they had established themselves as one of the major political and military powers, defeating many Mughal and Maratha feudatories in the North as well as independent rulers like Tipu in the South. Soon, the Peshwa, the head of the Maratha confederacy, was asked to enter into subsidiary alliances of Lord Wellesley.

However, it should be noted that the British did not make any haste to assert their Pramountcy over the Indian powers that they had defeated. According to Sir Lee-Warner they preferred to stay within the ring-fence of their dominion. He writes, " Beyond the ring-fence of the company's dominion, they avoided intercourse with the chiefs in hope that the stronger organizations would absorb the weaker and became settled States". [5] Thus though on certain occasions, the British had to interfere in the affairs of Indian Princes and take some aggressive steps, they generally preferred to stick to their policy of non-intervention and avoid the annexations.

Lee-Warner further elaborates the point, "There is the battle of Buxar in 1764, when Oudh lay at the feet of Major Munro, but was not annexed; the Rohilla war, after which Warner Hastings conferred the conquered territories on the Wazir of Oudh; the first Maratha war, which closed after the victorious march to General Goddard from the banks of the Jamna to Ahmedabad, in the restitution of Bassein and the restoration of the 'Status quo' by the Treaty of Salbai, dated the 17th of March 1782; and, finally, four Mysore wars, ending with the fall of Seringapatam in 1799, from which the allies of the British derived the main advantage, whilst the former Hindu dynasty of Mysore was gratuitously raised from the ashes of Haidar Ali's and Tipu's dominion." [6]

This phase is marked with two more characteristics. First, all the treaties except that with Mysore, were negotiated and concluded on the basis of equality and reciprocity. The British did not claim any Paramountcy over the Indian States, at least those which were not subdued. Secondly, each of their treaties guaranteed in a most solemn manner the absolute authority of the Indian ruler over his subjects and did not approve any British claim to intervene in their internal affairs. [7]

Wellesley's Subsidiary Alliance / Instruments of ?

The Policy of Subordinate Isolation

During this phase, from 1813 to 1857, the British made almost all the Indian States subordinate to their power, by compelling them to enter into subsidiary alliances with them. The Indian Princes were put under obligation to accept the British Paramountcy. They were to reduce their armies, rely more and more upon the Paramount army for the external and internal security and pay for expenditure of the same in form of money or territory. They had to banish all the non-English European employees from their services and conduct their foreign affairs through the British Government only. In all their disputes with other States, the British Government would act as an arbitrator. The Princes, in return, were guaranteed the territorial integrity of their state and protection from an invasion by any power.

In the times of Lord Hastings (1813 – 1823) more than 300 Indian States from Central India, Kathiwar and Rajputana were brought under the system of the subsidiary alliances. Though he was against the policy of annexation he strongly enunciated the policy of complete subordination and isolation of the States. During his regime, the Peshwa Power was completely destroyed and his feudatories like the Scindias and Holkars came automatically under British Paramountcy. The Gurakhas were defeated and the Pendharis were annihilated. Lord Hastings' successors pursued the aggressive policy and annexed Sind, Punjab, Oudh and other minor State in the following decades. This policy reached its climax in Lord Dalhousie's period i.e. from 1848 to 1856. He was a champion of the British imperialism. He defeated the Sikhs and annexed their State. He sent the British army and conquered the south of Burma. Applying the Doctrine of Lapse he annexed the States of Satara, Nagpur, Jhansi, Jaipur, Tanjore under the pretext of misrule, and confiscated the remnant of Oudh. He even stopped the pensions of the Princes of erstwhile States such as he did in episode of Nanasaheb Peshwa. All these factors led to a great unrest amongst the Indian rulers and also in the Indian society at large, which ultimately culminated into the Mutiny of 1857, a great event in the Indian history.

The Policy of Subordinate Union

The Mutiny brought about the end of the Company's rule and inaugurated a new era of direct rule of the Crown. The British now abandoned the policy of subordinate isolation and substituted a new one i.e. the policy of subordinate union. No doubt, the Indian States were to remain subordinate to the British power, but they were not to be kept isolated. On the contrary they were to be linked with some common bonds. They were to be treated as friendly allies and trusted in the times of difficulties. It should be noted that during the Mutiny the majority of the Indian Princes had remained loyal to the British cause and some of them even gave essential military assistance at critical junctures. Thus, the loyalty of the Princes had clearly exhibited the potential of the Indian States as a political force, supporting the British power in India. Hence, Lord Canning had aptly remarked that the 'safety of our rule is increased & not diminished by the maintenance of Native

chiefs well affected to us' and that they had 'served as breakwaters to the storm which would otherwise have swept over us'.[8] In 1858 the Queen of England declared in her famous proclamation that the Crown would scrupulously maintain all the treaties and engagements made with the Indian Princes by the Company and would respect their rights, dignity and honour as their own. The Crown had no desire to extend their territorial possessions. The Indian Princes were solemnly promised that their States would not be annexed on the ground that they had no son. They were granted the right of adoption in case they had no natural heir to succeed.

Thus the policy of jealousy and suspicion against the Indian Princes was intently given up and the policy of friendship and co-operation was enunciated. For the first time in history of British rule, they were accorded a permanent position as part of the British Empire. However, that did not mean that the Indian Princes were awarded more freedom of action than that they enjoyed before. On the contrary, Lord Canning unambiguously declared, "The Government of India is not debarred from stepping in to set right such serious abuses in a native government as may threaten any part of the country with anarchy or disturbance, nor from assuming temporary charge of a Native State when there shall be sufficient reason to do so."[9]

Thus, the Mutiny of 1857 proved to be the 'Great Divide' in the history of the British Empire in India. The British were successful in suppressing it. However, they certainly learnt two important lessons from it. Firstly, they felt that it would be unwise to neglect the popular sentiments of the Native States; howsoever backward they might look from the modern point of view. Secondly, they should take political and military precautious so as to prevent the States from uniting each other against them in future. Thus, it was a dual policy of conciliating and befriending the State on one hand and weakening them in gradual process on the other. We have already seen how the Queen's Proclamation began the process of conciliation. At the same time, the British were keen on gradual weakening of the States to whom they expected to play the role of pawns in the game of Indian politics.

'One Charge' Theory of Lord Canning

In the process of gradual weakening of the States, the British evolved 'One Charge' theory, which was enunciated by Viceroy Lord Canning, that India under the direct rule of the British and India under the rule of the Princes constituted eventually one political unit. The Declaration of Canning in 1862 says that the Crown stands forward 'the unquestioned Ruler and Paramount Power in all India'. Thus the whole of India was placed under 'One Charge' and the Indian States became transformed into 'Feudatories' of the Crown. The historical fact that the States had once fought and concluded treaties with the East India Company on terms of equality was almost forgotten. Now the States were put under the suzerainty of the Crown. The Princes had no other option but to accept the reality. This was a

was it thrust upon?

silent constitutional revolution, which had been brought about by the transfer of power to the Crown as a Paramount Power.

'The Sanads of Adoption', given to all the States, was a good exemplification of this constitutional development. The Sanads conceded to the Princes the right of adoption subject to the condition of loyalty to the Crown. Thus, while perpetuating the dynasties of the Princes, the British had established the Pramountcy of the Crown which was now given a legal basis. This was a sort of new legal theory of Paramountcy i.e. theory of 'One charge' provided by the Sanads of Adoption. [10]

Doctrine of Interference

The Paramount Power of the Crown was represented by the Government of India which soon shouldered a new sense of responsibility of set righting the abuses in the State. We have seen that Lord Canning had declared in 1860 that the Government had the right of intervention and could interfere in the internal affairs of any State. Sir Lee-Warner while explaining the scope of the Right of Intervention writes, "The right of intervention is not confined to the episode of open rebellion or public disturbance. The subjects of the Native States are sometimes ready to endure gross oppression without calling attention to the fact, by recourse to such violent measures; where there is gross misrule, the right or the duty, of interference arises, not withstanding any pledges of unconcern or 'absolute rule' which treaties may contain." [11] Canning's successor Lord Mayo (1869-1872) had elaborated the 'Doctrine of Interference' in the following words: "I believe, if in any feudatory State in India, oppression, tyranny, corruption, wastefulness and vice are found to be leading characteristics of its administration it is imperative duty of the Paramount Power to interfere and that if we evade the responsibility which our position in India imposes on us..... If we allow the people of any race or class to be plundered and oppressed... Further, I believe that under no circumstances can we permit in any State the existence of Civil war." [12]

The Paramount Power expected that the Indian Princes would govern their State with sense of justice and welfare of their subjects. Lord Mayo again warns the Princes in the following words: "If you wish to be a great man at my Court govern well at home. Be just and merciful to your people. We estimate you, not by the splendour of your offerings to us, nor by the pomp of your retinue, but by your conduct to your people at home.... If we support you in your power, we expect in return good government." [13]

It should be noted here that the doctrine of Interference as a policy of British Paramount Power remained in existence till the end of the British rule in India. The founding of the Mayo College for the education and training of the Princes was the vivid example of the British policy of shouldering the responsibility of good government in the States. The Government of India also lost no opportunity to introduce modern bureaucratic methods of administration in the States. In event

of minority regimes radical reforms were introduced in the prevailing systems through the Regency Councils.

Consequently, some of the States experienced domination of the powerful Political Agents or Residents. Even the Diwans of the States were sometimes nominated by the Political Department of the Government of India, under the pretext of policy of reforms, and State had to accept them without any protest. [14]

Consolidation of the British Paramountcy

The dual Policy of conciliation and domination of the British Government naturally led to the consolidation of powerful British Paramountcy which could not tolerate any form of misgovernment and unrest in the States. The glaring example of this policy was the trial and deposition of Malharrao Gaikwad of Baroda. Misgovernment and oppression of Malharrao constrained the British Government to depose him and put another Prince in his place. At that time it was declared that the British Government could not uphold the misrule of the Prince and that in such a case it was the positive duty of the Government to set right the things in the State. Lord Salisbury the Secretary of State (1874-78) had also officially declared that the Crown had accepted the responsibility of Paramount obligation of protecting the people of India from the oppression of the Princes.

The British Paramountcy accepted the responsibility of not only supporting the Princes in their place but protecting their subjects also from their misrule. No doubt that Baroda case alarmed the Princes who faced the reality of enforcement of the authority of the British Paramountcy over the whole of India.

In 1877, the first great Delhi Durbar was held to proclaim that the Queen of England had assumed the imperial titles 'the Queen-Empress of India'. It was meant to be a visible sign of the new 'Unity of India' under the British Paramountcy.[15]

Revival of Prestige of the Princes

The last quarter of the 19th Century withnessed the marked improvement in administrative system of the States and consequent revival of prestige and authority of their rulers. Its credit, to a larger extent, went to the aforesaid policy of Lord Mayo. Of course, some credit must be given to the inherent resilience of the States themselves. In many States, centralized administration with modern conceptions gradually took the place of feudal and military organization of the States. This administration had definite functions and obligations towards the people whose all activities were brought under the sway of civil Government. Some States like Baroda were fortunate enough to have a great administrator like Sir T. Madhav Rao who was heading the Regency Council set up by the British Government after the deposition of Malharrao. Sir T Madhav Rao, with zeal of modernization, laid a solid foundation of modern administration in Baroda on which Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwad could build a modern state. [16]

One more fact should be noted and that was regarding the armies maintained by the States. Their existence in the States had been an eyesore to the British Government. The British had not forgotten how they had proved themselves a catastrophe to the British Empire in 1857. However, with the passage of time, the British attitude seems to be changed. It was Lord Dufferin, who thought first that those armed forces of the States if developed properly would be useful for the imperial purposes. So he expected the States, which had a good military tradition, 'to raise a portion of those armies to such a pitch of general efficiency as will make them fit to go into action side by side with Imperial Troops'. Accordingly, we find that the British took effective steps in organizing the 'Imperial Service Troops'.

Under this scheme, the maintenance of such army by the States would be entirely voluntary and troops were to be recruited from the people of the States and officered by the Indians. This shows that in the eyes of the British, the State armies no longer constituted a threat to their Empire. Secondly, the scheme was a manifestation of a growing feeling of unity of India under the British Paramount Power. [17] It also naturally helped raise the prestige of the Princes whose armies were to fight on the battleground shoulder to shoulder with those of the British Government. However, the process of reviving the prestige of the Princes received a set back in the regime of Lord Curzon.

The Paramountcy at its Pinnacle

The Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon (1898 - 1905) has been rightly called 'high noon' of the British Indian Empire as the British Paramountcy reached its pinnacle of glory during his period. With his keen brain, boundless energy and firm dedication to the British Empire, he toiled hard to bend the Indian Princes to his will. [18]

It seemed as if all the claims of Paramountcy culminated in his theory of Imperialism. According to him the Princes were merely the agents of the Paramount Power in the administration of their States. He further declared, "The sovereignty of the Crown is every where unchallenged. It has itself laid down the limitation of its own prerogative". Once upon a time the Princes were considered as allies of the British Power. However, in course time, they were gradually reduced to the position of hereditary officers. So many humiliating restrictions were imposed upon them. For example, they could not leave their State without the prior permission of the Political Agent or the Resident in the State, nor could they use red Liveries. [19]

Cruzon was an out-and-out imperialist. He was not prepared to allow the Princes to indulge themselves in traditional ceremonial splendours. Even he took serious objection for using royal crown on the emblems of Princes of Cooch, Kapurtala etc. and for using phrases such as 'Royal Family' 'Throne' by the Princes such as the Maharajas of Barodas and Travancore. [20]

However, Curzon, himself being the most efficient and intelligent administrator of his time, expected from the Princes good and efficient governance of their States. He declared, "Their duty is one, not of passive acceptance of an established place in the Imperial system, but of active and vigorous co-operation in the discharge of its onerous responsibilities." In this respect, he asked the political officers to submit voluminous administration reports on the States under their control each year. The reports dealt with the character and achievements of the Princes and their attitude towards the British Government.

Curzon intended to compile a 'Native States Years Book' which would provide him an index for testing the 'normality or abnormality' of any particular State in its administration. Though his novel idea was never implemented, his axe of discipline and efficiency did fall heavily on some 15 Princes who failed to respond his 'shock therapy'. They were either forced to abdicate or deprived of their powers temporarily.[21]

Curzon toured India extensively, brought the Princes into his direct contact, invited them to Calcutta or Simla to see him and expected from them to seek advice and inspiration from him, as if he was 'a super Political Agent' in India. But most of the Princes did not like his modus operandi. His highhanded feudal policy and intellectually arrogant behaviour no doubt alienated the Princes especially those who were more progressive and modern in their outlook.[22]

The Laissez-faire Policy

It may not be incorrect to say that the problem of Indian States, their subordination to Paramount Power and their acceptance of Paramountcy had been in existence even before the British Paramountcy. But never before was Paramount control exercised in such a systematic and thoroughgoing manner as during the British Period.

The British in the course of time gradually developed a system of administrative and political power through their Political Agents in the States and Political Department of their Government. That system comprised of minute supervision, interference and thorough control in the States. The system had made the Indian Princes helpless and dependant on the mercy of the British Government No doubt, some of them at times protested against highhanded policy of the British officials. However, the Paramount Power hardly took the cognizance of their protests and changed its attitude.[23]

But the British Government had later to adopt change in their policy. This change came along with the changing situation in India, for which the Indian Nationalism was mainly responsible. The rise of Indian Nationalism was the second great crisis in the 19th century faced by the British Imperialism if the Mutiny of 1857 was the first one. But unlike the Mutiny it came not all of a sudden but stealthily. In 1880 s Nationalism manifested itself in formation of the Indian

National Congress. In the beginning it was the most submissive and subservient to the British Government. Even in 1890 s, the Congress was so weak and meek that Lord Curzon hopefully wished its early exit from the Indian scene in his Viceroyalty only. But that did not happen. With imperialist policies of Curzon, such as the Partition of Bengal, the Congress grew stronger and stronger with its national programme of Boycott and Swadeshi. And by the time Curzon left India, the national movement under the Congress had proved to be a biggest challenge to the British Empire in India. The Militant activities, though not approved by the Congress, only added to the discomfort of the Government. Under such circumstances, the Government lost their complacency and sought to play the Princely card as a political maneuvering. They saw in the Prince their allies, with their unwavering loyalty to the Crown. Fortunately, since the departure of Curzon their mutual friendship had begun to blossom so much that the Prince were one with the Government in their struggle against the Nationalists and Militants. Moreover, some of the Princes like Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwad were held in high esteem by the Nationalists and progressive minded people in British India. They were all praised for the advanced programmes of education and social reforms in such States.[24]

On this background, Viceroy Lord Minto decided to act and send a letter to the Princes in August 1909, asking them to advise him on the best way of dealing with seditious activities in the Country. The response was surprisingly overwhelming. The Princes not only replied the Viceroy with verbal promises but also responded with prompt actions against the Nationalists and Militants in their States. Even the Liberals were not spared. Their Newspapers were remorselessly suppressed in the States of Jaipur and Gwalior. Overjoyed at the success of Minto's overture, Sir Harcourt Butler, the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, felt more than ever that the British Raj and the Native States were destined to be the partners. Now, to the British Empire in India the Princes were 'only a real support' and trustworthy alliance![25]

Those were the days of the Morley-Minto Reforms. The constitutional reforms were being implemented in the British Provinces in order to appease the Nationalists of the Freedom Movement. Against this background the British Government felt the support of the Princes must not be taken for granted. However, their interests coincided with those of the British Empire, and that they must be awarded in return with a grant of 'autonomy in their internal affairs,' which would in the words of Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwad, 'improve rather than retard' the standard of administration of the States.[26]

Consequently, Lord Minto launched on November 1, 1909, the new Policy of the British Government, called 'The Laissez-faire Policy', in his speech at Udaipur. He declared, " I have always been opposed to anything like pressure on Durbars with view to introducing British methods of administration. I have preferred that reforms should emanate from Durbars themselves and grow up in harmony with

the traditions of the State... I cannot but think that the Political Officers will do wisely to accept the general system of administration to which the Chief and his people have been accustomed."

Soon, in 1910, under the guidance of Sir Butler, the Political Department Manual was issued confidentially to all the Residencies in the Native States all over India. It explicitly asked the Political Officers in charge of the affairs to 'place themselves figuratively in the Princes' shoes and try to appreciate their point of view, warned them not to offer gratuitous advice and urged them to always uphold the dignity of the Darbar. They were further told that 'unilateral interference should be reserved for cases where misrule had reached a pitch which violates the elementary laws of civilization.' [27]

Thus, the new policy of non-intervention was formulated to ensure that the Princes would serve as a loyal and sincere allies in the struggle of the British Government against the Indian Nationalists in British India. However, the Political Officers, of whom Minto & Butler expected its execution, were still imbued with the Curzonian spirit and reluctant to place themselves 'in Princes' shoes.' Butler himself had admitted that the new policy had offended feelings of 'some sensitive officers' but hoped that they would be able to adjust themselves with a passage of time. [28]

Towards the Chamber of Princes

Lord Minto revived the old idea of an organization of the Princes, under the title of an 'Advisory Council' of the Indian Rulers and notable zamindars, with view to recognizing the loyalty of the Princes and enlisting their interest in the imperial affairs. Earlier in the 1870 s Lord Lytton had proposed the formation of an 'Imperial Privy Council' of the Rulers of the Indian States. But his proposal was not accepted by the Home Government. Again in the times of Lord Curzon, he had suggested the formation of 'Council of Ruling Princes'. However, his suggestion had met the same fate. Minto's proposal also evoked little response from the Secretary of State Lord Morley who feared that the 'it might give the Ruler ideas beyond their station'. Morley's hint was sufficient for Minto to drop the proposal.

Lord Hardinge succeeded Minto in 1910. During his Viceroyalty, he called the Conferences of the Princes successively in 1913 and 1914 to seek their opinions on the issues of common interest. However, the set speeches and the debates on the trifling subjects there such as the 'future of Chiefs' College' disappointed the enlightened and active Prince like Ganga Singh, the Ruler of Bikaner. He appealed to the Viceroy to assign proper and permanent place to the Rulers of the Native States in 'the counsels of the imperial government' and see that they should be consulted in future for any bills in the Imperial Legislative Council, involving the interests of their States. However, the Viceroy dismissed the suggestion of Ganga Singh as 'rubbish' one. It seemed that the ghost of old concept of 'Subordinate Isolation' continued to dominate the imperialist mind of the British till the outbreak of the World War in 1914. The War compelled the British

Government to prepare themselves once again for reappraisal of their policy towards the Native States.[29]

The World War provided the Princes with an opportunity to show their loyalty to the king Emperor and their potential for helping the British Government with men and material. Responding to the scheme of the Government many Princes had raised their Imperial Service Troops which were now sent to the battlefields of Middle East and France. Besides this, several Princes, such as those of Bikaner, Jodhpur, Idar, Kishangarh, Jamnagar, Akalkot, Jamkhandi, Savanur etc. took actual part in the fighting of the War. As well, some generously donated money. For example, the Nizam of Hydrabad and Maharaja of Mysore offered the huge sum of Rs. 6,000,000/- and Rs. 5,000,000/- respectively.[30] In case of Kolhapur State, it was Rs. 39,000/-.[31] The Princes also sided with the Government on the propaganda front, helping them in their recruitment drive and opposing those elements which were opposing the War on the ideological basis.[32]

All these factors earned for the Princes the goodwill of not only the British Government but also of the King-Emperor George V. However, the War had created uncomfortable situation in India for the Government. The entry of Trukey in the War against the Allies and the fate of their holy places in Palestine, had inflamed the feelings of the Muslims in India. Their anxiety drew them nearer to the Indian National Congress, resulting into the Congress – Muslim League Pact of 1916. This was a rude shock to the Government which had been playing for the long the political game of 'Divide and Rule' in India. Besides Allies' War propaganda about the 'subject' minorities and the principle of 'self – determination' in Europe had raised the hopes of the Indian people at large that Government ought to give some major constitutional reforms to India. Under such circumstances, the Government was facing the most serious challenge since the days of Bengal Partition agitation. Naturally, they turned to their trustworthy and loyal friends and allies, the Princes of India, for help. The Government began to feel sincerely that some sort of permanent machinery for exchange of views and ideas between the Indian States and the Government must be set up. In fact the Prince of Bikaner had been voicing such a demand for a long time. Now, notable rulers upheld the Government overture and promised all possible co-operation.[33]

On August 20, 1917, Mr. Edwin Montagu, the new Secretary of State, made his historic announcement in the Parliament that 'the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire' was the declared aim of the British Government in India. Montagu's announcement was followed by his visit to India. Meanwhile the leading Prince of India had elected an ad hoc 'committee of four' consisting the Princes of Bikaner, Nawanagar, Patiala and Alwar for drafting common set of proposals to be submitted to Montagu.[34]

Establishment of Chamber of Princes

With a view to maintaining and safeguarding 'the Treaty rights, position as sovereign Princes and Allies, and dignity and honour and privileges and prerogatives of the Ruling Princes' the Committee of Four recommended the establishment of a 'Chamber of Ruling Princes'. The Committee also expressed that all the States be placed in direct relations with the British Government. It further recommended the creation of an 'Advisory Board' of the Princes to advise the Government on all subjects relating to the States and Judicial Tribunals to decide the interstate disputes or the disputes between the State and the Government. In short, the Princes wanted protection from the arbitrary powers of the British Paramountcy[35]

In February 1918, Montagu and Chemsford convened a meeting with aforesaid four Princes to discuss the report of their Committee. The Maharaja of Gwalior, Jaipur, Jodhpur and Kolhapur were specially invited to attend the meeting. They were all assured that no constitutional change, impairing the rights, dignities and privileges of the Princes, would be introduced in the forthcoming reforms. The Montegu-Chemsford Report was published in July 1918. It recommended the establishment of a permanent body of the Princes which would provide them with 'the opportunity of informing the Government as to their sentiments and wishes, of broadening their outlook and of conferring with one another and with the Government of India'.[36]

The following two years i.e. 1919 & 1920 witnessed a series of conferences and deliberations regarding the Constitution of the proposed body of the Princes i.e. the Chamber of Princes.

Finally, on February 8, 1921, the Chamber of Princes was set up by a Royal Proclamation and inaugurated by the Duke of Connaught on behalf of the King-Emperor. The ceremony was glitteringly performed in the Diwan-i-Am of the Red Fort in Delhi.

The Royal Proclamation reads as follows –

"My Viceroy will take its consel freely in matters relating to the territories of Indian States generally and in matters that affect these territories jointly with British India or with the rest of my Empire. It will have no concern with the internal affairs of individual States or their Rulers or with the relations of individual States with my Government, while the existing rights of these States and their freedom of action will in no way be prejudiced or impaired".[37]

The Chamber of Princes consisted 120 Princes. Out of these, 108 Princes were members in their own rights and remaining 12 memebers represented 127 States in India. Some of important States like Hyderabad, Baroda, Indore, Mysore, Jaipur and Udaipur did not join the organization. They felt that the working of the Chamber of Princes would 'Contravene the essential principle that each Prince is sovereign who is entitled to conduct his business direct with the British Government, without intervention of other Indian States, Consequently, Chamber of

Princes was destined to be dominated by a group of Princes from medium-sized States of Rajutana, Western India and the Punjab. There was a Standing Committee of the Chamber that consisted of five members in all. The number was soon increased to seven. In November 1921, the Committee had following seven members : Bikaner (Chancellor) Gwalior, Cutch, Patiala, Nawanagar, Alwar and Palanpur.[38] The Committee used to meet twice or thrice a year at Delhi to discuss the problems facing the Indian States and to submit its report annually to the Chamber. The Princes, who came to Delhi for the session of the Chamber, used to have informal conferences among themselves. This helped them foster the feeling of closer understanding and unity.[39]

Shahu Chhatrapati took keen interest in the conferences and deliberations leading to the formation of the Chamber of Princes. It should be specially noted here that he had been the champion of the smaller States' rulers. He therefore held the view that membership eligibility condition be modified in order to accommodate all the Princes, howsoever big or small. He had attended the inaugural function of the Chamber of Princes and was deeply involved in the working of the Chamber. His role and achievements in this respect will be discussed at convenient place.

Soon after the establishment of Chamber of Princes, Shahu Chhatrapati met untimely death in May 1922. The end of his reign automatically puts full stop to our discussion on the relations between the Paramount Power and the Indian States. However, it would suffice to say here that the days of apprehensions and mistrust between the two had given place to the days of friendship and trust. The change had definitely begun in the first decade of the 20th century and went on accelerating the process of co-operation with the passage of time. A distinguished authority like V.P. Menon had commented on the position of Paramountcy and the Princes in 1921 in these words : "The Paramount Power continued to be Paramount and Paramountcy remained as vague and undefined as ever."[40] No doubt, Mr. Menon was correct in his analysis. But that does not mean that the Paramountcy of the Lyttonian or Curzonian time was still reigning in the time of Montagu- Chelmsford. It should be noted that the friendship and co-operation rendered by the Princes to the Paramount power in the First World War had altogether changed the political scenario in India; so much so that Montague spontaneously writes to Chelmsford,

"I need not remind you, that after all we owe a greater – or at any rate as great – a debt to the Princes than to British India, and it is equally incumbent upon us to try and satisfy them."[41]

These are not the words of Montagu alone. But they are a real expression of sense of gratitude of the Paramount Power towards the Indian Princes who were considered by the British diplomats as their 'only real support' in India.[42]

References and Footnotes

1. WUD, p. 924
2. OED, p. 791
3. PPI, pp. 30-32
4. BRIA, p. 572
5. NSI, p. 59
6. Ibid, p. 59
7. EBP, p. 37
8. BPIS, pp. 16-17
9. CHI, Vol. VI, p. 493
10. BPIR, Part I, Vol. IX, pp. 960-962
11. NSI, p. 302
12. BPIR, Vol. IX, p. 964
13. BPIS, pp. 16-17
14. BPIR, Vol. IX, pp. 964-965
15. Ibid, pp. 966-967
16. Ibid, pp. 967-968
17. Ibid, p. 969
18. BRIP, p. 190
19. Ibid, p. 191
20. BPIS, p. 23
21. Ibid, p. 24
22. BRIP, p. 191
23. SMMCV, p. 373
24. BRIP, pp. 27-29
25. Ibid, p. 30
26. Ibid, p. 30
27. Ibid, p. 31
28. BPIS, P. 45
29. BRIP, pp. 31-32
30. KIA, pp. 18-19
31. RSCP, Vol. VII, Letter No. 82, p. 103
32. BRIP, P. 33
33. Ibid, pp. 33-35
34. Ibid, p. 38
35. BPIS, p. 54
36. CHI, Vol. VI, p. 902
37. Ibid, p. 902
38. BPIS, pp. 55-56

39. CHi, Vol. VI, pp. 902-903
40. BRIP, p. 19
41. Ibid, p. 58
42. BRIP, P. 30

Chapter II

Kolhapur Chhatrapati British Relations: Pre-Shahu Era (1765-1894)

In the middle of the 17th Century Shivaji the Great founded the Maratha State. It was his military genius that enabled him to overcome the forces of the Adilshah and the Mughals on the land and the Portuguese, the Siddis and the English on the sea. He built fortresses in the Sahyadri ranges and raised navy on the West coast. He created a very efficient civil administration, which served as a foundation for welfare State. In 1674, he crowned himself as a sovereign king in the Deccan, thus proclaiming to the whole of India that the Maratha Sovereign Power had been risen on the horizon of Indian subcontinent.

Such a great constructive genius passed away in 1680 and his death was followed by invasion of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, one of the mightiest Emperors in history. For 26 long years of his reign he moved heaven and earth for subjugating the Maratha State; but miserably failed in his mission.

Three successive rulers of the Marathas, Sambhaji, Shivaji's elder son, Rajaram, his younger son and Tarabai, his daughter-in-law fought relentlessly and eventually defeated the Emperor who, died in 1707 as a the most frustrated man on the earth. The Emperor could not conquer the Marathas, because they were fighting for a noble cause, a cause of freedom of Motherland and he was fighting to extinguish the freedom spirit of the Marathas. Hence, the War on their side has been hailed as the War of Independence of the Marathas! The most noted event of this War was the role played by the Maratha Queen Tarabai. Tarabai was just twenty-five when her husband Rajaram died in 1700. This young widow accepted the challenge of Aurangzeb and led the Marathas during the last phase of the war. She had been praised sky-high for her military and civil accomplishments by the historian like Khafi Khan. The contemporary Maratha poet Devdatta hailed her as an incarnation of furious Kali on the battle-field.

Such a great queen who had once humiliated the Emperor of India, had to face a civil war when her nephew Shahu (son of Sambhaji), released from the Mughal captivity, came to claim the Gadi of the Marathas. Unfortunately for her, the most of the Maratha Chieftons, including her Senapati, forsook her side to join Shahu, thus compelling her to retreat to the southern part of Maharashtra. There she established seat of her government at Panhala and in course of time this came to be known as the Kolhapur State. Panhala is in the close vicinity of Kolhpaur.

It is needless to go into the details of Tarabai's regime till 1714, when she and her son Shivaji I were deposed by her step-son Sambhaji I who ruled the Kolhapur State till his death in 1760. However his Rani Jijabai was shrewd and

diplomatic woman who ably assisted him in the governance of the State. It the last phase of Sambhaji's reign, she was the de facto ruler.

Sambhaji I had no son and hence Jijabai wanted wished to select an heir of her choice. But the Peshwa Nanasaheb was casting an evil eye on the Kolhapur State and wanted to grab this opportunity to confiscate it. It was Jijabai who foiled his all attempts and eventually defeated his forces on the banks of river Warna. Meanwhile, Peshwa's army suffered a horrible defeat at Panipat, which caused his untimely death out of utter frustration. The new Peshwa Madhavrao, a kind hearted and enlightened man, acknowledged the right of the Queen to select the heir of her choice & extended a hand of friendship and co-operation. Jijabai then adopted a son from the Khanwatkar Bhosale family, who was later on crowned as Shivaji II, the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur.

The Kolhapur State was a small kingdom with limited resources and unlimited antagonists on all its borders, namely the Patwardhans of Miraj, the Ghorpades of Ichalkaranji, the Desais of Nipani, the Savants of Wadi, the Portuguese of Goa, the British of Bombay on the West coast and pretty number of Sardars in the Warna region in the north. The Kolhapur Chhatrapati had thus to strive hard for existence under such hostile conditions. Out of these antagonists, the British were more opportunist, adventurous and aggressive. When they learnt of the Maratha debackle at Panipat, they jumped to the conclusion that the Maratha Power, including that of Kolhapur, had lost its prestige, strength and morale and that the Marathas had become too weak to resist any aggression on their possessions. To some extent, their assumption was not unfounded. We find them taking advantage of the Maratha retreat in the north and bringing the Mughal Emperor under their sway. In South too they set out on daring expeditions in Karnataka and on the West coast. Their aggression against the Kolhapur State was one of such activities.

First Clash and First Treaty

In the early 1765, the British planned to attack Sindhudurg, an important sea fort of the Kolhapur State, on the West coast. As they were in search of an excuse for the attack, they started making outcry that the Kolhapur navy was looting the British ships on the sea. Soon they laid a siege to the fort-(Jan, 1765). The Kolhapur navy fought bravely but suffered a setback on account of destruction of their ammunitions, caught in the sudden fire. As a result, the strong fort of Sindhudurg was easily captured by the British. The British renamed it as 'Fort Augustus'.[1] It was Shivaji the Great who had built the fort in 1664. The British captured it exactly 100 years after its construction. This is clearly indicative of the rising power of the British in India. It should be noted here that it was the first conflict between the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur and the British.

The British activities did not cease after the conquest of Sindhudurg. They were consistently trying to capture some more forts with their naval strength under some pretext or other. Jijabai tried her level best to contain the rising

dominance of the British on the West Coast. On September 6, 1765, she appealed to the British General of Bombay to restore the fort of Sindhudurg to the Kolhapur State. She also sought help from the Portuguese Viceroy to liberate the fort. But it was all in vain.[2] In her letter, dated December 28, 1764 she again appealed to Thomas Mustin of Bombay to return the fort and establish friendship with her State.[3] Jijabai also sent a letter to Conde de Ega, the Viceroy of Goa to mediate between her and the British and help her recover Sindhudurg. She addresses the Viceroy as 'Bhai' i.e. the brother.[4] Thus, she tried hard to resolve the problem on the diplomatic level.

Eventually, Jijabai succeeded in making a treaty of friendship with the British on January 12, 1766. This was the first treaty of the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur with the British. The treaty contained 14 articles in all. As per this treaty, the British agreed to return the forts of Sindhudurg, Rajkot and Sarjakot to the Kolhapur State and also agreed to maintain friendly relations with the Queen. The most important aspect of this treaty was the permission granted to the British to set up their factory in Kolhapur State. This facilitated the growth of British commercial as well as Political interests in the Kolhapur State, which in course time proved fatal to its sovereignty.

Second and Third Treaties

Since the treaty of 1766, the relations between the Kolhapur State and the British were quite cordial upto 1791. It was during this period that the British were busy warring against Tipu and so they needed help of the Kolhapur Statein their to fight against him. The relations between Kolhapur and the British began deteriorating later in 1792. The British once again put forth their earlier excuse that their ships on the West coast had been harassed by the Kolhapur navy. In fact, the British desired to extend their imperial dominance on the Westcoast and the fort of Sindhudurg was the chief obstacle in their way. By this time they had brought their Karnatak army to the West coast to assist their naval Power. With full preparation of large scale attack, the British sent their army against Sindhudurg. The Chhatrapati of Kolhapur realized his weak position and sued for peace. Subsequently the treaty was concluded on November 25, 1792 at Bombay. The British extracted a large sum as the compensation for the so-called damage to British mercantile navy done by the Kolhapur navy. One of the articles of the treaty allowed the British to raise their factories at Malwan and Kolhapur and maintain troops to guard them.[5]

The Patwardhans, the Sawants as well as the Desais (Sindhojirao Nimbalkar) from Nipani, were a few native Sardars who were consistently causing nuisance to the Kolhapur State under the instigation from the Peshwa. Their relation with the Kolhapur Chhatrapati deteriorated during the period from 1800 to 1811. Under some pretext Sindhojirao Nimbalkar would intrude into Kolhapur territory and would push his forces and harass the people. In 1811, he boldly attacked Kolhapur State and defeated its forces. Facing Sidhoji's onslaught was a difficult

task for the Kolhapur Chhatrapati Shivaji II. His hapless condition gave one more opportunity to the British to enter into the Kolhapur politics. As a result of the treaty of 1792 the British had almost established their sway on the West coast, except Sindhudurg. Now they had an opportunity to grab it while extending a hand of co-operation and military assistance to the Chhatrapati. Consequently, the treaty was signed on October 1, 1812, which explicitly stated that- The Raja of Kolhapur would hand over Sindhudurg to the British and in return the British would help him recover all those forts & places, which were snatched away by Sidhojirao and the Savants.

1. The Raja would transfer the places such as the Malwan harbour, Sindhudurg, Rajkot, Padmkot & Sarjekot to the British.
2. The Raja would never maintain an armada on the West coast.
3. The Raja should never wage war against any foreign power without the prior advice of the British Government. [6]

It is needless to state that the last two clauses of the treaty put severe limitations on sovereignty of the Kolhapur State. The Chhatrapati lost his power and freedom to adopt an independent foreign policy of his State. The Sovereignty of the Kolhapur State vanished and in its place, the British Paramountcy crept in.

It was Sambhaji II alias Abasaheb who succeeded to the throne after Shivaji II in 1813 Abasaheb maintained the dignity of his position as Chhatrapati during his tenure of eight years. However, during his reign the dominance of British power went on increasing. In addition to that his unexpected murder gave rise to many new issues regarding the heir to the throne. However, he was succeeded by his brother Shahuaji Alias Buasaheb Maharaj in 1821.

Buasaheb and the Fourth Treaty

In 1821 Buasaheb invited Mount Stuart Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay to Kolhapur who accepted the invitation and met him at Shirol. One of the purposes of the meeting was to settle the family discords with the help of Elphinstone. Such a move on the part of the Chhatrapati undoubtedly decreased his prestige and elevated the dominance of the British. [7]

Soon, the conflict between Rani Channama of Kittur & the British arose in 1824. Buasaheb decided to take interest in the Kittur affairs and extend help to the Rani against the British. The adoption of Shivlingrudra Sarja by the Rani was rejected by the British. So she had no option but to fight against the British. The British army attacked Kittur fort ferociously. But the Queen repulsed the attack with great bravery. Meanwhile, Buasaheb started with his army towards Kittur under some pretext. But when the Political Agent of Dharwar, Chaplin came to know of Buasaheb's movements, he warned him not to proceed further, or else face the serious consequences. This forbade Buasaheb to help the Rani.

But even after the Kittur episode Buasaheb didn't stop his military activities. He began preparation for capturing Kagal in May 1825. The British again warned him against his undesirable moves. However he did not pay any need to their

warning and he captured Kagal and established his hold on it. This could not to be tolerated by the British. They decided to teach a lesson to the Chhatrapati and laid siege to the Kolhapur fort with 6000 troops. The warfare continued for a while, but soon the Chhatrapati surrendered after becoming aware of his inability to face the attack of the well – equipped British army. Eventually, the British enforced a treaty on the Chhatrapati on December 30, 1825. Following were the important clauses of the treaty.

1. The Raja would reduce his army and would never raise such a force that shall be likely to endanger the public tranquility within or without his territories, unless with the previous consent of the British. The Raja would attend to the advice of the British on measures for public tranquility. However, this clause was 'no wise to diminish the independence of the Raja as a sovereign Prince'.
2. The Raja would 'never molest' Hindurao Ghatge of Kagal and Narayanrao Ghorpade of Ichalkaranji.
3. The Talukas of Chikodi and Manoli were ceded to the Raja by the British, but had not been mentioned in any treaty or agreement. Now, the British acknowledged them to be ceded to the Raja in full sovereignty.
4. The Raja was to pay within 60 days Rs. 1,47,948/- as compensation for the loss suffered by various people as the consequence of the recent warfare. If the payment was not made in 60 days, the Raja would transfer to the British Chikodi and Manoli from whose revenue the British would then deduct the sum.[8]

The treaty was confirmed by the Governor in Council of Bombay on Jan. 24, 1826. The Chhatrapati could not make the payment of fine to the British in 60 days; hence the British confiscated the Talukas of Chikodi and Manoli. The Treaty of 1812 had empowered the British to regulate the foreign policy of the Kolhapur State. The Treaty of 1826 started the British process of controlling the internal administration of the State.

Episode of Baby Elephant and Fifth Treaty

In 1828, Buasaheb had conflict with a Vaishnav Swami from the South on the issue of a baby elephant. The Vaishnav Swami who had come to visit Ambabai Temple at Kolhapur carried a baby elephant with him. Buasaheb took an instant fancy with it and asked the Swami to give it to him. But the Swami refused to part with it, so Buasaheb forbade him to leave the city without his permission. The alarmed Swami complained to the British Akhbarnavis (reporter) Ramrao Desai. He told the Swami that he (Swami) was the subject of the British Government and therefore the Chhatrapati had no authority to stop him from leaving Kolhapur. At the fort gates of Kolhapur Ramrao was manhandled by the guards. This infuriated Ramrao who protested to the British Principal Collector at Dharwar, Mr. Nisbet, that the British authority had been defied and disregarded in Kolhapur! Nisbet was not slow to seize the opportunity. He at once started for Kolhapur with an army, sending

ultimatum to Buasaheb to communicate his willingness to abide by the British advice. To this the Chhatrapati sent a prompt reply, saying he was prepared to abide by the British advice. But Mr. Nisbet did not return. He kept on moving towards Kolhapur and sent yet another ultimatum demanding "all rights to the forts of Kolhapur, Panhala, Pavangad" and asking to disband the newly recruited army. The Chhatrapati agreed to these new demands also, Surprisingly, however, Nisbet marched against Kolhapur and laid siege to it, despite the fact that his all demands were conceded. The Kolhapur army was no match to the well-trained British army. Consequently, the Chhatrapati surrendered to the British and accepted all the terms of the treaty put forward by them-(October 24, 1827).

The new treaty was ratified on March 15, 1829. By this treaty Raja was obliged –

1. to disband his extra soldiers and reduce his military force to 400 horse and 800 foot;
2. to cede Talukas of Chikodi and Manoli permanently in payment of the expenses incurred in the expedition;
3. to surrender the forts of Panhala and Pavangad and to permit a permanent British garrisons at Kolhapur and Panhala and to pay their expenses;
4. to pay the compensation of Rs. 1,47,948/- for damages done to his neighbours and cede territory of an annual income of Rs. 50,000/- till such time as the amount was recovered.
5. to accept his 'Chief Minister' nominated by the British and agree to be guided by his advice in all matters of administration of the State. The British Government was to have a "sole power of appointing and removing the said minister as they may see fit"[9]

The terms of the Treaty obviously betrayed the greedy designs of the British who unscrupulously dealt with the Chhatrapati and exacted territorial and financial gains from him to the possible extend. The Chhatrapati had already lost his control over the foreign affairs of the State. Now, he had to part with power of ultimate control over the internal administration. No doubt, all this declined of the power and prestige of the Chhatrapati was the result of his flouting of British dictates and his immature behavior in the field of diplomacy. At the same time it should be remembered that this was a transitionary period from almost absolute sovereignty to that of a state subservient to the British Paramount Power.

Reeves' Recommendations of Administrative Reforms

Buasaheb met an untimely death while on his pilgrimage journey to Tulajapur. He was 34. His son, Shivaji III, alias Babasaheb was eight years old and hence a minor. His grandmother, Saibai, Sr. Rani of Abasaheb took the reins of administration as regent, setting aside the rightful claim of Anandibai, mother of Babasaheb, to the headship of Regency Council. Naturally, it led to family feud and factional intrigues. Most of the Saradars joined one side or other.[10]

In addition to this, the Kolhapur State had got heavily into debt of 6.5 lac rupees. Disorder in every branch of administration prevailed. Money was spent with "utter disregard to futurity." [11] This resulted into deterioration of administrative machinery and the financial management of the State. The British, as a Paramount Power, felt the need of intervention from time to time and they did it. Every time the British profited from the new measures they adopted while the Kolhapur State was put to loss of one power or other. The British used to send their Political Agents from Darwar to Kolhapur who sought to settle internal disputes of the Court and to improve the administration and finances on the modern lines.

One such British Political Agent Henry Reeves visited Kolhapur in 1842 and recommended several stringest administrative measures. He required that –

1. Expenditure should be incurred strictly in terms to budgetary provisions.
2. The Political Agent should appoint the necessary number of clerks in Kolhapur and demand from them quarterly accounts and would bring to the notice of the Regency Council, all cases of excessive spending.
3. A correct assessment should be made of the debts of State.
4. Annual accounts should be furnished to the British.
5. In order that justice should be delivered without fear or favour, judiciary should be divorced from the control of the Principal Administrator and his colleagues and a suitable qualified man appointed as judge.
6. The British would appoint a 'Native Agent' to the Kolhapur Court who, while in no way interfering with the administration, would keep close watch on it and submit periodic reports to the Political Agent. [12]

All these recommendations were approved by the Bombay Government and soon put into measures. One can see how the British were playing the role of a Paramount Power with heavy-handed control of the administration of Kolhapur. In 1843 Reeves successor Townsend, appointed Ramchandrapant Rajadnya as the Principal Administrator, thus taking full control of Kolhapur administration.

Revolt of 1844 and Its aftermath

However, Rajadnya was a Kolhapur man brought up in feudal atmosphere and with his long hereditary tradition of loyalty to the Chhatrapati. Against this background, how could he be a wholly British servant? He could not carry out his duties with that zeal and sternness that demanded of him by the British. Naturally, Rajadnya was replaced by one Daji Krishna Pandit, a senior officer in the British Commissioner's office at Dharwar. His main qualification for the post, of course, was that he had no previous ties with the Kolhapur State or aristocracy. He was expected to carry out much needed administrative reforms without fear or favour.

He soon embarked upon series of systematic but drastic reforms. For economic discipline, he imposed monetary cuts in all departments. He stopped the practice of reckless distribution of grants of land and villages and farming out the collection of land revenue to middlemen. He demanded from all State officials the punctual submission of all accounts. He also decided to disband some part of the Kolhapur army.

However, the people had grown up in the feudal traditions. In the recent regime of misrule and disorder under the Regency Council, some of them, especially the state officials and sardars, had experienced and enjoyed freedom of lawlessness. Under such circumstances, they were in no mood to be disciplined by an outsider man imposed on them by the British. Naturally, Daji Krishna Pandit became increasingly unpopular with the state officials and servants who showed their resentment by neglect and even open defiance.

Atmosphere of crisis was brewing at many places in the State; however it sparked off its first outbreak in the form of rebellion in the outlying fort of Bhudargad. The Gadkaris (garrison) of the fort refused the admittance to the Mamaledar, newly appointed by Daji Krishna, 'fearing that their rights would be interfered with'. This was followed by revolt of Gadkaris in the fort of Samangad, near Gadhinglaj, some 20 miles away from Bhudargad. Soon the revolt spread to almost all parts of the State, including the forts of Panhala, Pavangad, Rangana and even Kolhapur itself. At the news of initial success of rebels, common people in the vicinity of forts got activated and joined the rebels.

However, strength of rebels in the forts was no match to the British military force, sent by Henry Reeves, the Political Agent in Belgaum. The garrison at Samangad, realizing that no outside succor was forthcoming surrendered the fort to the British. Revolt at other places also met the same fate. The British army captured the forts one by one and demolished their strong fortifications in order to prevent similar risings in future. Those found guilty were deported from Kolhapur to the places like Asirgad and their estates confiscated. Saibai (Diwansaheb) was also found to have given active support to the rebels and was deported to Pune. [13]

The Chhatrapati Babasaheb and his brother Chimasaheb both being minor were saved from the consequences of the revolt. Some the British officials were of the view that the State be abolished as 'they had conquered it'. However, it was Reeves that reported to the Governor that there was no justification for annexation of the State; and his stand prevailed. Luckily, for Kolhapur Lord Hardinge and not Lord Dalhousie, was the Governor General of India at that time. [14]

The Governor of Bombay had appointed Court of inquiry to go into the causes of the revolt. In its report the Court had recorded its opinion about the revolt in the following terms:

"The feeling (of rebels) must have been national. What has taken place is not an insurrection of dissatisfied subjects against the Kolhapur Government but a general rising of the Kolhapur State against the British Government". [15]

Though the Kolhapur State was saved from abolition, the British had sternly decided 'not to, at present or at any time in future' permit the Raja to rule. However, the British Government, on second thought, took flexible stand, saying that question of restoration of Power to the Raja would be considered when he would come of age. However, a new arrangement had to be immediately made for administration of the State. So the British Government created a new post of the Political Superintendent to head the administration with wide civil and military powers. Major Graham was appointed as the first Political Superintendent of Kolhapur and Daji Krishna Pandit his deputy. [16]

Revolt of 1857 and its Aftermath

13 years later, the British in India were to witness a Great Revolt of 1857, which has sometimes been hailed as the First War of Independence! It started in the North and soon spread to the far away places like Nargund, Kolhapur etc. in the Southern Maratha Country. The 27th Native Infantry revolted on July 31, 1857. But it was not a just chain-reaction of the risings but it was pre-planned and its leader Chimasaheb had established secret contacts with leaders of the mutineers such as Nanasaheb Peshwa in the North.

It is needless to go into details of the revolt here. However, it should be noted that the Kolhapur revolt passed through two phases. In the first phase, the men of the 27th Native Infantry rebelled while another battalion; Kolhapur Infantry remained loyal to the British. With the help of this Kolhapur Infantry, the British could repel the onslaughts of rebels and save the City from falling into their hands. Soon, the rebels fled towards Ratnagiri and Savantwadi. Meanwhile, the Bombay Government had sent special military force under Col. Jacob who, upon his arrival at Kolhapur, mercilessly awarded punishments to the men of the 27 Native Infantry. Some were hanged and others blown away form guns- (August 19, 1857) [17]

Babasaheb had received messages from Nanasaheb Peshwa, but he had ignored his appeals, knowing that it was futile to oppose the mighty British Power. However, his younger brother, dynamic and spirited Chimasaheb, responded to the appeals and organized a general uprising of the people. In December 1857, hundreds of armed men gathered in the jungles in the vicinity of Kolhapur and they soon managed to enter the city, posting their guards at its gates. They even entered the Palace and took charge of the buildings. It was evident that but for the secret support of Chimasaheb, the rebels would not have dared enter the city and the Palace.

Col. Jacob, with his small force, mostly the white, boldly approached the main gate of the city and succeeded making entrance into it. He could even enter the Palace itself and demanded that all armed people in the Palace premises be disarmed. Babasaheb promptly agreed and disarmed the people who were eagerly

waiting for an order from the Chhatrapati to annihilate the enemy. Jacob randomly captured 36 men and shot them dead with an intention of striking terror amongst their fellow men. When Jacob saw Babasaheb and his brother, he found the Raja expressing gratitude profusely while Chimasaheb remained sullen and silent. [18]

Jacob tried his utmost to collect evidence indicating involvement of Chimasaheb in the uprising of the people, but he could not succeed. He knew for certain that Chimasaheb had been the principal figure behind all the turbulent activities in Kolhapur. He had also witnessed Chimasaheb's immense popularity amongst his people and himself has described him as 'a man of energy and true descendant of Shivaji'. Such a person was a potential threat to the British interests in the Deccan. Hence Jacob decided to remove him from the political scene of Kolhapur. Soon, Chimasaheb was deported to Karachi under the orders of the Governor of Bombay. There this unfortunate Prince was detained under house arrest till his death in 1869. [19]

It was an inflexible loyalty of Babasaheb that had saved the British men and their military force when they entered the city and Palace. It must also be noted that his loyalty had also saved the Kolhapur State from abolition at the hands of the British. The Raja of Kolhapur knew the strength of the British Power and the weakness of his State. So he saw wisdom in remaining loyal to the Paramount Power.

By the end of 1858, the uprising had been suppressed and those involved had been sufficiently victimized. In the same year the rule of the East India Company came to an end and in it place Queen's regime started. Reign of terror was put to end and new era of clemency and welfare of the subjects dawned. The Indian Princes were promised that their 'rights, dignity and honour' would be respected.

The Treaty of 1862

Under such circumstances, the new Governor Sir George Clerke visited Kolhapur in 1860. During his visit Babasaheb pleaded for the restoration of the ruling powers to him. Upon his return to Bombay, the Governor announced that Kolhapur Raja had been placed in full charge of his private estate while as far as administration of the State was concerned, he should work in close collaboration with the Political Agent. [20]

When, in 1862, Babasaheb again appealed to the Governor to restore to him the full-fledged ruling power, the latter agreed to entrust the former with full administrative power, provided he undertook to abide by certain terms and conditions. Accordingly, the Treaty of 1862, a landmark in the relations between the Kolhapur Chhatrapati and British Paramount Power, was signed. The following was the full text of the Treaty.

"Article 1. "That in all matters of importance the Rajah of Kolhapore agrees to follow the advice of the British Government as conveyed by the Political Officer representing that government at Kolhapoure."

Article 2. That under the Rajah's administration there should be a khasgee karbaree, as at present, whose accounts should be kept separately, and be annually included in the State accounts in single item.

Article 3. That the Rajah's durbar should send its correspondence with other courts through the Political Agent.

Article 4. That the revenue administration should be entirely in the hands of the Rajah, he making arrangements for the liquidation of the British debt by installments of at least one lakh of Company's Rupees per annum.

Article 5. That the Rajah should make no new alienations of land without the concurrence of government until the British debt is liquidated.

Article 6. That the Kolhapore infantry should be maintained at its present strength and be under the command, as at present, of British officers; and that the Rajah should continue to pay Rupees 28,914 per annum the sum required for the detachment of the Southern Mahratta Horse at Kolhapore, so long as it may be deemed desirable to station the detachment within the Kolhapore territory.

Article 7. That the present three native courts of civil justice be maintained, with an appeal court, to be called the Rajah's court,

That there should be a combined court of the Rajah and the British Agency for the disposal only of cases against the higher Sirdars. The mamlutdars should have authority in minor criminal cases, as at present.

That for more serious criminal cases there should be a Nyayadesh court imposing sentences of imprisonment for such period as may be fixed by the Rajah, sentences of longer imprisonment than three years to require the confirmation to the Rajah, and sentences of death to be referred to the authority of Government.

Article 8. That certain of the higher jaghiredars, such as the Pratinidhee of Vishalgur, the Pant Amatya of Bowra, the Chiefs of Kagul, Inchukurunjee, Kapsee, Torgul, the Sirluskur, Narayen Rao of Kagul, Ruma Bai Walwa, Himmut Bahadoor, should be considered as still in some degree under the supervision of the Political Agent, who should act, as far as circumstances will permit, in co-operation with the Rajah's government; and that all criminal cases within the jurisdiction of these Sirdars, involving death or imprisonment beyond seven years, should be forwarded for trial before the Political Agent, for submission to Government. The supervision proposed to be retained over these Sirdars, and the guardianship of such of them as may be minors, by the British Government acting in concert with the Rajah, are not intended in any way to infringe the seignorial rights of the Rajah, but merely to secure good government, and to prevent those disputes which in old days were frequently the cause of disturbance and bloodshed.

Article 9. That the Rajah should defray, as long as it may be considered necessary by government, the expenses of the Agency, including the salaries of the Agent, with establishments. That the Rajah should also defray the expenses of all

public buildings which may be deemed by government necessary for the troops stationed at Kolhapore".[21]

Thus the Treaty once again explicitly maintained the comprehensive authority of the British Paramount Power over the Kolhapur State stating that the Raja would administer his State under the guidance of the British. Even his Sardars were placed under 'the supervision of the Political Agents' and they were obliged to forward all criminal cases involving death sentences or imprisonment beyond seven years for trial before the Political Agents. This, they argued, was not intented in way to encroach upon the seigniorial rights of the Raja, but merely to secure good gournment!

The Treaty also showed how the British maintained their armed forces at the cost of the Natives Princes who were also obliged to defray the expenses of the establishments of Political Agents, stationed in the States. Moreover, it should be noted that the Treaty of 1862 served as a major base for the future relations between the Kolhapur Raja and the British Paramountcy, including the period of Shahu.

Alongwith power of discretion, Babasaheb was also granted an honour of the salutation of '19 cannons instead of 17'. Later on, the British Government conferred on him the title of 'Knight Commander of the Star of India' (K.C.S.I). However, before the letter conferring on him the title reached Kolhapur, he had died on August 4, 1866.[22] Thus, he could exercise his power of discretion only for two years.

The Reign of Chhatrapati Babasaheb

Before Chhatrapati Babasaheb could get the power of discretion, the British had gradually eliminated all the local currency from practice. Accordingly all the mints in the Kolhapur State were closed down. Consequently, the British coins came into currency. The increasing British influence became evident through an event regarding the protocol of the Darbar. Earlier, the Political Agent had to adhere to certain rules and customs during his meeting with Chhatrapati. But the British started feeling offended with these rules. So the Governor of Bombay, through a special resolution dated Aug. 27, 1842, declared that if the Political Agent visited the Chhatrapati, it was the Chhatrapati who should receive him and if the Chhatarapati visits the Political Agent, the Agent should receive him. In this way the Chhatrapati instead of being treated specially, was treated as an equal to the Political Agent.[23]

During the period of Babasaheb, the Kolhapur State began pass to under the influence of modern thinking and scientific outlook of the British. To provide educational facilities to the subjects was considered to be duty of the government. So, in 1848, two Government Marathi schools were started in Kolhapur. Soon, a public library was also started in Kolhapur city. The first Printing Press was established in 1852. In 1853 the first English medium school and the first

Girls school were also started. In the same year one Krishnarao Chaphaji started the first newspaper entitled 'Wartaman Sangrah'.[24]

In 1841, an order to prohibit the inhuman custom of trading of human beings (slavery) was issued.[25] In 1848, the uniform system of weight and measure was implemented in all State. In the same year, the first Government Hospital was started by Major Graham. The Kolhapur Municipality was founded in 1854 and the first post and telegraph office was started in the same year.

Thus though the power of the Chhatrapati had been restricted by the British, the State of Kolhapur and its people were being gradually introduced to the modern age. It was a transition from medieval to the modern time.

Chhatrapati Rajaram and the British: 1866-1870

Chhatrapati Babasaheb had adopted his nephew Nagojirao Patankar who later ascended the Kolhapur Gadi as Chhatrapati Rajaram. On Oct. 29,1866 the Governor of Bombay, Sir Bartle Frere, announced enthronement of Rajaram as Chhatrapati of the Kolhapur and made him aware of his further responsibilities regarding his state and subjects. After his speech, the Raja was presented with a set of robes & received a salutation of 17 guns fired.[26] Later, he made a speech expressing his loyalty to the British Paramount Power. He thanked the British saying that it was because of them he could lay claim to the Gadi and that he would certainly rule the State under the guidance of the Political Agent.[27] Anderson, the then Political Agent, had recommended that since the new Raja was still a minor, the reins of administration should once again be taken over by the British and that the young Prince should be groomed under British supervision for his succession as the ruler. His recommendation was approved by the Government and Anderson himself was appointed as the Chief Administrator of the State.[28] Rajaram was only 16 when he ascended the Gadi. All the control of the governance was in the hands of the Political Agent. But Rajaram made a mark of his intelligence even during the brief period of four years of his minority. His interest in knowing even the minutest things in administration, his desire for the welfare of his subjects, his fascination for Western culture and education, and his scientific outlook, all this showed his intellectual awareness as an enlightened ruler. He had achieved mastery over English language in a short period and had increased the number of schools imparting Western education.

Anderson appointed a British officer Captain West for looking after education of Rajaram.[29] A new special residence was built on the outskirts of the city for his educational activities. He had been an avid reader. There he got an opportunity to read English journals in the company of the British officers. He used to discuss various issues in the Country with these officers. He also adopted Western manners and etiquettes in their company.

Captain West had introduced him to the conduct of public business activity and the participation of revenue, civil and criminal work. In 1870, he was

assigned the charge of the Khasagi Departments and had to conduct much more important and multifarious task.

In 1867 Rajaram founded the first English High School, (later known as Rajaram High School) with the help of Anderson and a British Engineer. A well-known architect Capt. Charles Mant prepared the plan of the school building in a special style near Nagarkhana. In 1870, the Raja was invited to lay its foundation stone. At this moment, Anderson expressed his hope that the Kolhapur educational establishments would attain full development and success in near future.[30]

On February,21 1870 Rajaram attended the reception function of the Duke of Edinborough, the second son of Queen Victoria in Bombay. Soon his Europe trip was discussed at the official level, as he was quite anxious to see the world outside. However the prejudices of the Hindus of those times regarding crossing of the sea were so formidable that one could hardly undertake any voyage on the sea.[31]

However, he left for England on May 22, 1870. Anderson and West had trained him to keep a diary as a part of his curriculum. Naturally, he recorded all his impressions in the diary about people, events and places. We come across the accounts of his meetings with the Prince of Wales, Queen Victoria, Dadabhai Naoroji and Maharaja Dulipsingh in London. He also visited many interesting places, such as noted industries and famous universities.[32] His keen interest in imbibing the qualities of European culture like equality, simplicity, modernity and education was very well exhibited through his tour of England. Unfortunately, during his return journey his health declined and he died at Florence in Italy on November 30, 1870.[33]

Had Rajaram been fortunate enough to live a little longer, Kolhapur State would not have waited long for its prosperity till the rise of Shahu. Shahu's insight and empathy towards his subjects and his skill to acquire the British support in his endeavours were already evident in Rajaram but due to his untimely death, his vision was not materialized.

Chhatrapati Shivaji IV and the British: (1871 – 1883)

After the death of Rajaram, Narayanrao Sawardekar from the Khanwatkar Bhosale family was chosen as an heir by the Political Agent Aderson and was adopted on October 23, 1871. He was installed on the Gadi as Shivaji IV.[34] At the beginning of his reign all the details regarding the situation in Kolhapur State were reported to the Bombay Government by Anderson. The report comprises the information regarding the royal family, the educational arrangements for the Chhatrapati, the condition of administration and the history of the Kolhapur State.

Shivaji IV visited Bombay to attend the Darbar of the Viceroy in November 1873. On his return to Kolhapur from Bombay, the education of the younger Raja continued as earlier. Anderson sent a report to the Bombay Government that the Raja's educational progress was good. In 1874, Captain

Schneider was appointed as the Political Agent in the place of Anderson. Shivaji again visited Bombay to meet the Prince of Wales in 1875. There he presented a sword studded with jewels and a dagger to the Prince. He also granted Rs. 20,000 in the name of the Prince of Wales to build Albert Edward Hospital in Kolhapur. [35] Later when Queen Victoria assumed the title of 'the Empress of India' in January 1877. Shivaji was to attend the Darbar in Bombay held in her honor. But at this time a larger part of the State was affected by famine. And Sir Richard Temple, the then Governor of Bombay had asked all public servants to remain at their post. In view of the fact that none of the public servants, both the British and Indian, could have accompanied him, Shivaji had to cancel his visit, as most of his officials were engaged in the famine relief work in the State. However, the British Government conferred upon him the title of K.C.S.I and awarded the insignia to the royal family on this occasion.[36]

Soon after the aforesaid Darbar, Shivaji was said to have suffered from mental disorder and subsequently his condition deteriorated. In fact from his adoption to 1878, his nature was quite stable without any signs of insanity. His educational progress, his Bombay Darbar visit, the title awarded to him by the British were all in accordance with his logical and normal behavior. Till this time, there had been no room for any complaints regarding his behaviour. Had there been any sign of abnormality found in him, the granting of knighthood to him would certainly have been withheld. Thus, he was found to be an absolutely normal boy who was both physically and mentally quite healthy. It should also be noted that Sakwarbai and the elders in the family even wanted the Raja to be married and that the Political Agent had agreed to their proposal. It is quite obvious that the Political Agent would not have recommended his marriage, had there been any signs of his mental disorder. His marriage took place on May 21, 1878.[37] After his marriage, the Raja was sent to Rajkumar College of Rajkot by the Political Agent, where he was found to be a normal person. Sir Richard Temple, the Governor of Bombay, visited Kolhapur to lay the foundation stone of the New Palace and during his visit he saw the Raja.[38] Especially after the Governor's visit the Raja was reported to shows the signs of his illness. Consequently, he was transferred from place to place for a change. He was treated by three British doctors namely Hunt, Cook and Murphy. He was kept under the strict supervision of Diwan Mahadev Vasudev Barve, a British Officer Edmond Cox and a British Soldier Green. History reveals that the Raja was given inhuman and cruel treatment under the disguise of the treatment of Dr. Murphy. As a result, his condition deteriorated miserably and showed no signs of improvement.[39]

The Kolhapur Regent and the British

The administration of the Kolhapur State was transferred to the Regency Council on March 15, 1882 on account of the so-called insanity of Shivaji. On 16th March Political Agent Col. Reeves held a full Dress Darbar and handed over

the charge of state affairs to Abasaheb Ghatage, a feudal chief of Kagal and nephew of Chhatrapati Babasaheb as the Regent of Kolhapur. Government of Bombay granted a personal salute of 9 guns to the Regent of Kolhapur. [40] On this occasion, Shivaji was absent because of his ill health. In his speech, Col. Reeves announced, "Abasaheb as a Regent will represent the Raja of Kolhapore. The Great Indian statesman Mountstuart Elphinstone who declared that it should be the aim and the object of the English to teach the natives to govern themselves and I, therefore, expect that you the Sardars and the people of Kolhapore will render the same cheerful respect and obedience to the orders of Regency that you would to your Sovereign." [41]

This clearly shows the importance attached to the position of the Regent by the British Government. Col. Reeves further recalled the deplorable condition of Kolhapur State in 1843, and the appointment of Daji Krishna Pandit as an administrator to cope with lawlessness then prevailing in the State and warned the subjects and Sardars to co-operate with the Regent and the British Power or else the Government would assume direct control over the state affairs.

From 1882 the affairs of Kolhapur State were administered by the Regent, assisted by a council of three members. The members of the council were the Rao Bahadur Diwan Barve, Chief Judge Khansaheb Meherjibhai Taraporwalla and Chief Revenue Officer Raobahadur Yeshwant Kelkar.[42] According to the resolution of the Government of Bombay dated, March 30,1882, all arrangements that were obligatory to Babasaheb under the treaty of 1862, were to be binding on the Regent-in-Council. The power of appointment and the removal of the Regent and the members of his council remained vested in the Government of Bombay. Moreover, the Regent – in – Council was asked to maintain the existing judicial and revenue system of the Kolhapur State.[43] Though Abasaheb was granted the above powers as the Regent, the British Government retained the Khasagi (private) department of the royal family under the direct control of the Political Agent. The British Government did not intend the privy purses of the Queens in the royal family and their reputation and prestige to suffer on account of the authority of the Regent. Therefore, in order to avoid internal clashes within the royal family, the British Government kept the Khasagi department under their direct control.[44]

Tragic death of Shivaji IV and role of the British

After 1878 the mental health of Shivaji, it was given out, further deteriorated and he was confined in the fort of Ahmednagar, within three months from the commencement of Abasaheb's regency period. He was tortured physically and psychologically by the British officers Cox and Green and this fact was deliberately neglected by the members of the Royal Family and the Regency Council. In his recommendations about the Raja to the Bombay Government in 1882, Reeves, the Political Agent, suggested that the Raja should be transferred to Karachi and two persons under the political control of Judge or Collector of Karachi

should be appointed in place of Cox. However, these recommendations were not accepted by the Government. All this led to the discontent amongst the subjects of Kolhapur towards the British Government. Tilak and Agarkar, young journalists from Pune, tried to expose the matter of injustice done to the Chhatrapati by publishing the confidential correspondence of Diwan Barve in the 'Kesari' and the 'Maratha'. But in the court of law they had to withdraw the allegations due to the lack of evidence and had to suffer imprisonment.[45] The unfortunate Chhatrapati was tortured by the British soldier Green and was treated like a prisoner in Ahmednagar fort, where he met his miserable death on December 25, 1883.

It was not the British policy at that juncture to apply the principle of annexation to the princely states in India; naturally it was not their intention to do so in case of Kolhaur State also. Even after the revolt of 1857, Kolhapur State was not annexed. On the contrary the British took proper care of education of Chhatrapati Rajaram in later period. They merely wanted to install such a ruler who would remain under their control and loyal to them. And Shivaji was the type who would never go against them. Therefore it cannot be inferred that the British intended to kill him and annex the State. Moreover the British had not observed any sign of insanity or rebellion in Shivaji. On the Contrary, he was awarded the title of K.C.S.I. They had also allowed his marriage considering him mentally fit.

The conscience of the British was more clear till then but later on there was a sea change in their attitude. It seems the British officers were involved in the conspiracy hatched by Diwan Barve, ambitious Regent Abasaheb Ghatge, as well as dowager Queen Sakwarbai.

It was a fact that the British treated Shivaji as a prisoner at the Ahmednager fort and tortured him to death. However, they pretended his death to be accidental one and ordered its enquiry. On the top of all they declared that Green had treated him kindly and, therefore, he was acquitted of the charges leveled against him. The great and high talks of justice proved simply to be the empty vessels of the British, as they acquitted Green who had brutally killed a native ruler like Shivaji. This clearly shows their pretense and convenience while defining justice.

It can thus be inferred that the British seem to have deliberately encouraged the arrogance of Barve, political ambitions of Abasaheb and intrigues of Queen Sakwarbai which eventually wrought the tragedy. The possibility, that being a de facto ruler, the Regent Abasaheb must have won over some of the British officers to his side, can not be completely ruled out.

Shahu's adoption and the British : 1884

After the death of Shivaji IV, the Governor of Bombay instructed the Regent to carry on the administration of Kolhapur State as before. Shivaji had died within two years of the regency period of Abasaheb. So the problem of succession to the throne emerged again. All the dowager queens, Taibai, Ahilyabai, Sakwarbai and Anandibai, expressed their wish before the Political Agent to adopt

the elder son of the Regent Abasaheb. Even Abasaheb himself considered his own son to be more competent and eligible as the heir apparent to the Gadi. Eventually it was unanimously decided to adopt Abasaheb's son Yashwantrao alias Babasaheb as a heir and Anadibai, the queen of Shivaji IV, later accepted the decision. [46]

The political Agent too expressed his opinion in his report to the Government of Bombay that as a popular ruler of the State the Regent would surely render the best of his services to improve the deplorable conditions of the State and that he would be more than ever careful and zealous in the performance of his exalted duties, if his son was selected as the Raja of Kolhapur. [47]

The adoption proposal thus endorsed was accepted by the Bombay Governor who, in turn, expressed his views, stating that the Regent's eldest son would gratify the desire of the people of Kolhapur to be ruled over by their own sovereign. [48]

At the time the question of Nazarana to be offered by the Kolhapur State to the British was discussed at length by the British Government. However, they felt that the rules of Nazarana were not to be applicable to the Kolhapur State as the Nazarana tradition was not in vogue in its history. Because ever since its establishment as an independent principality, there had been three occasions of adoptions in the Royal Family and the Kolhapur State had always been exempted from the 'Nazarana' rule on every occasion. At all the three adoptions, right from 1731 (i.e. from the establishment of Kolhapur as an independent principality) no nazarana was expected or imposed by the Paramount Power.[49] Hence the British Government did not levy Nazarana at the time of Shahu's accession to the Kolhapur Gadi. [50] The Government of Bombay sanctioned Rs, 20,000/- for the adoption ceremony which was held on March 17, 1884,[51] in the Ambabai Chowk of the Palace. As soon as Maharaja took his seat on the ancient Kolhapur Gadi, a salute of 19 guns was fired.

In his speech during the adoption ceremony the Political Agent Col. Reeves said, "We hope that His Highness will be a strong link between English men and the natives of this country. A liberal education and extensive travel will enable the Raja with his influence and high position to introduce measures and ventilate ideas which might be liable to misconstruction if they emanated from Europeans. There is every possibility that with good training Babasaheb (Shahu) will prove a judicious and popular ruler among Marathas... His accession to the Gadi this day will not only be a happy thing for Kolhapur but for India at large." [52] On this occasion Reeves performed some auspicious rituals to eradicate the prejudices and superstitions deeply rooted in the minds of the people of Kolhapur. For example he immersed the bones and ashes of dead Kings, and Queens of Kolhapur in the Ganga at Banares. [53] This shows how the British were conscious of the strong influence of the traditions and customs of the natives.

The last sentence in Col. Reeves' speech was significant and noteworthy. His futuristic words indicate the significance of the Kolhapur Gadi in larger perspective of the entire Country and underlines confidence of the British regarding the future welfare of State under the new Raja. Their intention in educating Shahu was to cultivate him as an enlightened mediator between the Kolhapur natives and the British. They also hoped that education and travel would rationalize Shahu's thinking and that it would enable him to reform his own society. The British, therefore, expected that Shahu's reign would prove to be more easily acceptable to the natives who were eager to be governed by their own sovereign.

While discussing the future plans of the British Government regarding the Kolhapur State, Col. Reeves said, "For forty years we have been improving the Kolhapur State and we have the highest authority for saying that this principality is in a very advanced state whether we look to its revenue, judicial, public works, educational, medical, sanitary and the other departments. In the immediate future we hope to perfect a scheme for drainage of the town of Kolhapur, to make arrangements to bring a railway line into Kolhapur from Miraj. We also hope to reforest our section of Sahyadri range. We should be able to make the most of our abundant crops of sugarcane and possibility to manufacture sugar. There are other industries also which can be started."[54]

It is thus evident that the British Government had consistently been working for forty years to develop Kolhapur State in all possible ways. Col. Reeves' speech during the adoption ceremony provided an outline to the future contribution of Shahu in the development and the progress of the Kolhapur State in particular and the Maharastrian Society in general.

After reviewing the relations between the British and the Kolhapur state for 26 years from 1857 onwards, it can be concluded that the British made some fundamental changes in the State administration, as well as in the Darbar practices and the rights of the Chhatrapati during the reign of Babasaheb. These changes were confirmed by the treaty of 1862. It was mandatory for the Chhatrapati to observe the treaty obligations. The political authority of the British was well settled in the Kolhapur State during the reign of Babasaheb and further stablilized as a suzerain power till the advent of Shahu.

Thus in pre-Shahu period, the British Government had established full control over the entire administration of Kolhapur State. Even the administration 61 Khasagi departments was controlled by them. For example, the grants under every department could not be exceeded without the due reasons shown and without the permission of the Political Agent.[55]

It may also be observed that the British Government was very cautious and alert while selecting and grooming Chhatrapati for his role as a head of the State. They expected the Raja of Kolhapur to be a wise, experienced and responsible ruler, keen on the welfare of his people. This shows that the British, though a foreign

power, never intended the natives to remain uncivilized and the Indian States to be undeveloped and languishing. Despite being a sovereign power they were keen on promoting making the Indian Princes seriously aware of the welfare of their subjects. No doubt, they had appointed the rulers of their choice; but they had prevailed upon them to rule effectively under their control and supervision.

Thus the period preceding the advent of Shahu witnessed the disciplined British tactics of handling the state affairs and their well-planned and cautious actions which ultimately provided a guiding political backdrop of Shahu's career as a ruler of Kolhapur State.

Shahu – British relations before the Installation

The period of Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati was the most transformational period in the socio-cultural and political history of Maharashtra. As a ruler of a Princely State, Shahu had to rule under the domination of British Paramount power. But he very skillfully and diplomatically took the help of the British to rejuvenate his people without putting his self-honour at stake. The relations of Shahu with the British during 1884 to 1922 were very complex and politically manipulative. The effect of these relations for almost 38 years was later seen on the overall development of Kolhapur. As the foundation of these relations was laid during 1884 to 1894, it is necessary to analyse them from the time of adoption of Shahu to that of his Installation.

The Period of the Regency and Education of Shahu

After the adoption of Shahu, the Political Agent Col. Reeves requested the Bombay Government that the Regency Council, created before the death of Shivaji IV, be continued.[56] As per this request, Bombay Government ordered on March 17, 1884 that the Regency would function in the name of Shahu.[57] However, in the same year, in July, Reeves objected to the dysfunctional administration of the Regency by writing a letter to Diwan Raobahadur Barve and warned that the Regency had to administer the State by following all the instructions of the Bombay Government. In his letter he says, "I have the honour to point out to the Regent in Council that the Regency has evidently lost sight of the confidential instructions of the Government.....I merely desire to draw the attention of every member of the Regency to the engagement of the treaty of 1862 in accordance with the affairs of Kolhapur State.....By the treaty of 1862 you will exercise a careful supervision over the selection of the officials of the appointment below that of the member of Council and over their dismissal." [58] The letter shows that in the initial period of Shahu's reign, though the administration was in the hands of the Regency, it was completely controlled by the British Government.

In the beginning Krishnaji Bhikaji Gokhale and Haripant Gokhale were appointed as the tutors of Shahu. All the arrangements of Shahu's education was done under the supervision of the Assistant Political Agent FitzGerald. Reeves expressed the desire to send Shahu to England for education. But the Governor of

Bombay Sir James Fergusson and Abasaheb Ghatage decided not to send Shahu to England at such a tender age. Therefore, all the arrangements of Shahu's education were made under the supervision of FitzGerald who took over the charge 'the Raja of Kolhapur' on August 29, 1884.[59]

FitzGerald submitted his first report of Shahu's progress during 1884-85. This report shows that Shahu did receive vernacular education equivalent to that of the other boys of his own age. Though he required more grounding in English, he had been improving considerably. He received knowledge of all subjects of standard II sanctioned by the Department of Public Instruction for Anglo-Vernacular Schools. Among the various subjects he learnt were English and Marathi Grammar, History of India, and Geography of Asia and Europe as well as Drawing.[60] This indicates how cautious the British Government was regarding Shahu's education.

After the death of Abasaheb, the post of Regent was accepted by British Political Agent Lee Warner,[61] who made many recommendations regarding the administration of Kolhapur State, in April 1886. These recommendations reveal clearly the nature of the administration of Regency. Till the time, there was no foundation in existence on which the superstructure of popular government could have been erected. The Kolhapur municipality needed a constitution and the necessary basic elements of self-government. There was a lack of independent rural boards and representative associations in the State. Lee Warner, therefore, thought that State of Kolhapur was not yet ready for the forming of Government, which would promote the public opinion and local societies to a desired standard. Consequently the British Government as trustees of the minor Raja was not prepared to depend safely on the people. [62] Therefore, Lee Warner recommended the Government that the present system should be continued for six months at least. His proposal was accepted by the Government.

In the meanwhile, Khan Bhahadur Meherjibhai Kuwarji was appointed as the President of the Regency in the place of Diwan Madhavrao Barve. [63] As the British Government thought that a British Regent was no more required to head the Regency, they appointed the Khan Bahadur as President of the Regency for period of a year. However, this Regent was also totally under the control of British Government. [64]

On October, 14, 1886, Lee Warner suggested a change in the system, as he found the Regency Council administration suffering from expensiveness and dilatoriness. Howeve, he doubted that the change would not be welcomed by the 'Palace and the upper class in Kolhapur.' Therefore, he further recommended that the existing system should be continued. [65] This shows that after the mutiny of 1857 the British followed the policy of not making any drastic change in Indian society and not to hurting higher elements in the society, while reforming the administration of a Princely State.

In November, 1886, the British Government ordered that the Regency Council should be continued under the presidentship of the Diwan of Kolhapur on an experimental basis & not under the Political Agent, who however would keep supervising its working. [66]

During all these developments between the British Government and the administration of the State, Shahu had a meeting with Viceroy Lord Dufferin in November, 1886. He later wrote to Lord Dufferin and expressed his loyalty to the British Paramount power. He also conveyed his desire to maintain friendly relationship with the British Queen, like his father. [67]

On May, 27, 1887, the British Government granted the Regency Council judicial status as the highest court of appeal in Kolhapur State and it was categorically stated that 'the jurisdiction of the Governor in Council as the highest court ipso facto ceased to exist.' Consequently, the appeals pending before the Governor in Council were transferred to the Regent in Council in Kolhapur. [68]

As the Regency, under the Presidency of Diwan Khan Bahadur Meherji Bhai Kuwarji Tarapurwala on the experimental basis, functioned satisfactorily, Reeves recommended to the Bombay Government to continue the same Regency Council On November, 29, 1887 the Government accepted the suggestion. [69] However, the British took utmost precaution to have their complete control over the Regency.

The foundation of 'Kolhapur – Miraj Railway' was laid at the hands of Shahu in 1888. This was undoubtedly the result of the efforts of Bombay Presidency Government and ultimately of Government of India since 1880. Abasaheb, the then Regent, was present for the conference in Dec 1885 with the Political Agent and the British Chief Engineer regarding the construction of the Railway. Government of India had granted Rs. 22,75,00/- for the purpose. It was earlier named as Kolhapur – Miraj Branch Railway. However, as per the request of Kolhapur Durbar it was renamed as 'Kolhapur State Railway'.[70] The foundation ceremony of the Railway took place on May 3, 1888.

At this moment, Shahu said, "We are all under the benevolent protection of the British Government and that, as we already know, during my minority every thing will be done to further the welfare of Kolhapur of which this Railway is a prominent instance..... The success of this Railway should have a beneficial influence in developing the resources of my State" [71] Political Agent Colonel Hunter also explained the benefits to the State due to the Railway. He said, "The rich will be able to transport their goods more quickly and cheaply, many educated persons and labours will find employment and the Rayat will be stimulated to extra exertion"[72] The views expressed by Shahu and Col. Hunter proved to be true later.

Because of the railway facility the business and trade of Kolhapur State prospered and the people had an easy access to new markets. Shahu's statements also

indicate that even before his installation, at an age of 14 Shahu, was aware of the welfare of his people. This event was significant because it was first public function in his life.

Though this railway proved beneficial to the State and the people and though in the speech of the Political Agent at the foundation ceremony its glorified purpose was stated, the fact that the British needed such a railway for their imperialistic and commercial designs could not be overlooked. It was clearly evident that behind their mask of the welfare of the people, they had their imperialistic face hidden.

It should also be noted here that during the uprising of 1857 Kolhapur had become an important center of rebel activities and hence the British had to struggle hard to bring the British Army to Kolhapur. With reference to this event, the need of Railway was felt by the British to facilitate passage of the Army to Kolhapur State as and when it was required in case of any political unrest.

Later in 1889 Shahu met the British Prince Albert in Pune. Shahu was the only Prince felicitated by the British Prince by calling a special Darbar at Pune. [73] Shahu had developed cordial relationship with some of the British officers. He also had close relationship with the then Political Agent Lee Warner, as he happened to be the close friend of Shahu's biological father Regent Abasaheb Ghatage. Lee Warner, James Ferguson & Lord Reay had expected Shahu to be an accomplished, responsible and virtuous ruler like his father. [74] Lee Warner appointed S.M. Fraser as a tutor and guardian of Shahu in February, 1889 and soon left for England.

Shahu's independent spirit was seen through an event that occurred in February, 1890. Shahu received a letter from the British Government, that Lord Reay, Governor of Bombay, was completing his tenure and retiring to England in the month of April. It was, therefore, decided to erect a memorial in the memory of the great work done by him, so Shahu was expected to participate in the fund raising movement for this purpose and to be the chief contributor. [75]

Since Shahu held a position of a helpless ruler under the domination of the British, it was naturally expected that he would take this proposal as an order of the British Government. But Shahu very diplomatically conveyed them his inability to contribute on the pretext that he was still a minor and therefore could send only his best wishes to them.

Shahu's tutor Fraser was liberal and dutiful. He started educating Shahu & his classmates at Dharwar from June 11, 1889. He observed the details of Shahu's nature during their stay at Dharwar. He consistently used to send Shahu's progress report to Bombay Government. He introduced Shahu to Mathematics, Geometry, History of England, and Freeman's General Sketch, Faucet's Political Economy, Hindu and Muslim law, short lives of Lord Dulhousie, and Lord Canning as well as the Laws and various treaties between Kolhapur State and the British and

some important historical events. Thus, all the education and training necessary to be an ideal ruler was imparted to Shahu by Frazer. [76]

The British Government not only delivered the bookish knowledge to Shahu, but also provided him with the practical knowledge of life by arranging his tour within the Country and to Ceylon even. Moreover, by appointing two native tutors like Gokhale and Karmarkar, for imparting knowledge of Indian Culture, the British Government brought perfection in Shahu's education.[77] This shows the dutifulness of the British officers in Shahu's Company and their cautiousness in bringing about the development of his personality.

In 1891, Lord Harris, the Governor of Bombay, was quite insistent on sending Shahu to England for further education. But Shahu was not interested in going to England immediately. He first wanted to move around in his own society as his subjects were deprived of their King for many years and were looking forward to his arrival very eagerly. Therefore, Shahu felt the need of approaching them first and providing them support and security. The plan of sending him to England was diplomatically and skillfully, thwarted by him. He called on the Governor in this connection and later informed him of his desire in his letter. He wrote, "My mother and my grandmother feel that I may loose my character if I go to England at this age. Because according to them, as I am yet unstable, I may fall prey to the temptations in Europe. My subjects will also not be apprehensive if I bear children. Besides I'll be more able to reap the fruits of this plan of England after a few years" [78]

In this way Shahu shrewdly convinced the British Government neither by open protesting against them nor by hurting them. This was one of the first glimpses of Shahu's diplomacy towards the British. In the meanwhile Lt.Col.Hunter was appointed the Political Agent after the retirement of Lee Warner. Hunter was later followed by Wodehouse as the Political Agent.

From contemporary correspondence of the British Government it is seen that not only Shahu's adoption and installation but the issues like his marriage and his further marital life were not just considered as his personal issues. But they were looked upon as a systematic sequence of events under the strict supervision of British Government. Shahu was married to Laxmibai, daughter of Sardar Gunajirao Khanwilkar of Baroda on April 1, 1891. There is a letter of the Political Agent warning the Diwan of Kolhapur, prohibiting Shahu to marry till he turns 18. It also enlists the criteria under which Shahu's queen would be selected. Such as ---

1) Age as above 12 or 13 years.
2) Sound constitution and good health.
3) Good looks
4) Absence of any hereditary disease in herself or her parents.
5) Family antecedents.
6) Education and natural intelligence, temper and disposition. [79]

15259

The British Government seems to be cautious even about the education of the Queen. She was initially taught in Vernacular by one Chandrabai, a native tutor and was later on tutored by an European teacher in the palace under the supervision of the dowager Queen Sakwarbai, as per the wish of Shahu. [80] The question of Queen's education was handled by the Political Agent Wodehouse in a very careful and considerate way, which was greatly appreciated by the Council since it involved in it the sensitive issue of native manners, etiquettes and customs. This clearly shows how the British Government was keen on regulating the private life of native princes under their paramountcy.

The British Government also displayed the skill from time to time to study the psychology of Indian society and tried to bring about the change slowly and in its own stride.

On February, 4, 1893, at the invitation of Shahu Lord Harris, the Governor of Bombay visited the animal exhibition held in Kolhapur State. Shahu hosted a welcome party in his honour. At this moment, Lord Harris said, "You have here had the opportunity of seeing what British Administration is able to do, and of noticing the effect of that power, seldom spoken of, but at the same time an enormous power, the power of the British capitalists. You had the opportunity last year of seeing what that power does....."[81]

Lord Harris' speech shows that the British did never loose even a single opportunity to openly proclaim the power of their Empire and to impress on the rulers of the Princely States that they were under the complete domination of the mighty British Paramount power. By exerting psychological pressure on them the British would thus exhibit their superiority complex from
time to time.

The British Government started its preparations for Shahu's installation from March 1893. Lee Warner had expressed his views regarding this matter. He says that Shahu should administer the State as per the advice of the Council for the period of two to three years, but it is Shahu himself who is to decide the system of his governance later. He further adds that as the ultimate responsibility of the administration belongs not to the Council but to the Raja, he has to accept the advice of the Political Agent after coming to power according to the 1862 treaty. [82]

Fraser also had made a few recommendations to the Government before Shahu's installation regarding his education before and after the installation. According to Fraser, once Shahu was installed, he would be in full charge of the State. But then the education to be imparted to Shahu would never be completed. Keeping in view Shahu's psychology he was not the kind to study voluntarily. Therefore, he should be granted only limited powers after installation. But Political Agent Wodehouse and the Governor both had rejected this suggestion by Fraser. Moreover, Wodehouse had brought it to the Governor's notice that granting limited power to Shahu was more or less like his non-installment. The Gaikwad of Badoda

was installed only after 6 months of education and training at the age of 19 whereas Nizam was installed at the age of 18. On this background, the Raja of Kolhapur had made three educational tours throughout India and had broadened his mind by travels and liberal education he had received. [83] After such considered deliberations, the British Government decided to grant full powers to Shahu after installation.

As the time of Shahu's installation was approaching fast, the British Government became more cautious about the installation and the powers to be given to Shahu. The Government started making Shahu and the people of Kolhapur aware of the scope and the limitation of Raja's power. In October, 1883, the Secretary to Bombay Government pointed out that the installation ceremony had to be so grand that it should instantly flash on the minds of the people, instead of slow awareness, that the rule of their Raja had begun. They should understand that the British Paramount power had granted the powers of the State formally to the Raja as its representative. [84]

On January 22, 1894, Lee Warner wrote to the Governor about the advice to be given to the Raja. He said that the Governor should intimate the Raja beforehand of his responsibility that would begin soon after the installation. But in doing so, any kind of expressions that would create conflict should be avoided. He further said, "The Governor's speech will indicate the stress laid upon his acceptance of the Political Agent's advice to which by Treaty of 1862 he is bound to listen, and the need for maintaining the due rights of the Treaty Jahagiradars."[85]

As per the advice of Lee Warner, the Governor of Bombay gave instructions to Shahu before installation about the administration of the State. He explained him how to distribute the work. Shahu was to have all freedom to decide upon the system of Government for his State. The Governor further advised Shahu that he should observe various advantages and disadvantages of the systems of governments of Native States in Western India. He should decide his own system of Government by seeking advice of those people who had sufficient knowledge and experience of administration. However, while doing this he should never forget the treaty obligations. [86] This indicates that Shahu was given freedom to choose the system of internal administration after his installation. Shahu, on his part, assured the Governor to abide by his instructions by sending him a letter on February, 10, 1894. [87]

During the preparations of the installation, a minor but striking thing was noticed by the Governor. It so happened that the invitation cards for the installation ceremony got printed with the title of Shahu as Maharaja instead of Shahu Maharaj. The Governor took its serious note and enquired with the Political Agent Hunter whether Shahu himself had assumed the title of 'Chhatrapati Maharaja' in the place of 'Chhatrapati Maharaj'. The Political Agent then clarified that the title 'Maharaja' was inadvertently used and it was not a deliberate act of Shahu. [88]

The background to this issue is that in those days all the rulers of the Princely States were called 'Raja' by the British. Only the rulers of some important States like Kolhapur were allowed to call themselves 'Maharaj'. But the title 'Maharaja' was conferred upon only a few exceptional rulers by the British Paramentcy, as later history reveals that such title was conferred upon Shahu by the British Queen. Thus the title 'Maharaja' was not to be used by all and sundry but only by those fortunate ones whom the British did the favour. And if, in case, someone uses it, they seem to take a serious note of it. This shows the intensity of British Paramountcy in India.

Lee Warner wrote to the Secretary of the Governor before the installation i.e. on February 28, 1894, "....The Kolhapur investiture should be our leading precedent for all future investitures..... This Darbar of investiture is the Darbar of the Governor of Bombay. The Southern Maratha Jaghirdars must visit the Governor before the Durbar" [89] It is thus evident that Shahu's installation was a significant event for the British Government too.

And then dawned the actual day of Shahu's installation. On April 2, 1894 at 5 p.m. a special Durbar was held and Shahu was handed over the charge of Governance by Governor Lord Harris. The Governor was honored with the salutation of 17 guns whereas Shahu was honoured with 19 guns. The subjects of Kolhapur had desperately been waiting for this moment to happen. With Shahu's assumption of the powers, the rule of the Regency Council came to an end. Shahu started to govern his State as the Chhatrapati of Kolhapur. Shahu brought out his first proclamation on this occasion in which he expressed his desire for the welfare of his subjects.

During his speech on this occasion Lord Harris referred to the tragic happenings in the Kolhapur State for the last 30 years and the people desperately waiting for the day the rightful heir would come to power. He also expected Shahu to follow the footsteps of his forefathers regarding loyalty to the British Crown, strict adherence to the engagements, treaties and Sanads between him and the Paramount power. He was full of praise for the contribution Shahu's tutor Fraser, Col. Wodhouse and Lee Warner had made to the development of Shahu's mental power, personality and his welfare. [90] He also spoke liberally about the choice granted to Shahu to decide his own system of administration after studying systems of administration, both in British and Native State territory. Shahu was asked to remain untrammalled by any political advice which under his treaty engagement he was bound to accept.

The Governor also appealed to the Chhatrapati, " to rule and so direct his acts that they would earn him the greatest reward of a wise ruler, the respect and the affection of a contented people." [91]

The speech of Lord Harris at the time of installation ceremony gives us an idea of the fiery ordeal that Shahu was to face in future. Shahu's speech was an

expression of his reaction to Harris' speech, in which he thanked the Governor for his valuable advice and for handing over him the charge of his State and expressed his gratitude for his personal welfare. He also was grateful to his father and to his Guru Fraser. He also thanked Sir Fergusson, Lord Reay, Col. Wodehouse and Col. Hunter for their good wishes and advice. He declared his loyalty to the British Empire and the Queen Empress and promised them to follow all the engagements, treaties and Sanads that would maintain his relations with the Paramount power.[92]

Thus, a review of British-British relations from 1884 to 1894 indicates that while functioning as Paramount power the British also desired to maintain law and order without allowing any unrest or discontent to spread in the Native States in India. So they wanted to choose such a ruler who would prove to be a well cultured, enlightened and a welfare king. They also wanted him to follow all the treaties and engagements honestly and be loyal to them forever. Hence, it seems they had taken a great care in the development and shaping of Shahu's personality. However, there was no noble purpose behind their anxiety to maintain the law and order in the Native States. On the contrary it was necessary for them to safeguard their own imperial interests by maintaining law and order in the Native State and by dominating and putting their rulers under complete control. The British Governor perceived these States and their rulers as the strong pillars of the British Empire. It was the British policy to take care of these pillars and nurture them as bulwarks of their support system. Significance of Kolhapur State in the history of the Marathas, its role in the uprising of 1857, were undoubtedly the contributing factors to the cautiousness and sensitivity of the British in the development of Shahu's personality during 1884 to 94 i.e. from his adoption to his installation.

References and Footnotes

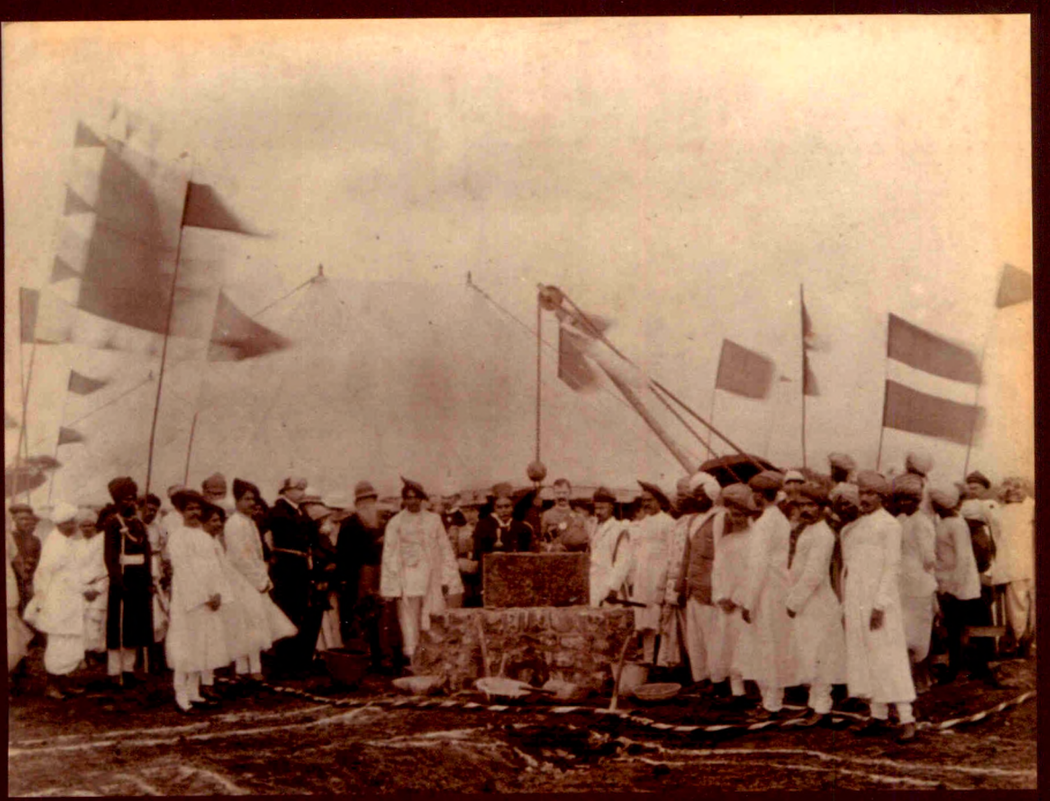
1. KR, p. 290
2. JKK, Letter No. 198,199, pp. 202-204
3. Ibid, Letter No. 200, p. 205
4. Ibid, Letter No. 219, p. 225
5. KR, p. 331
6. TA, pp. 8-12
7. KR, pp. 439-440
8. TA, pp. 12-16
9. Ibid, pp. 21-25
10. CK, pp. 438-440; KR, pp. 466, 481-482, 491-494
11. CK, p, 443
12. Ibid, p. 466
13. National Archives : New Delhi – Political letter to Court, No. 69, 19-06-1945.
14. KR, pp. 506-514
15. SRK, pp. 544-545
16. CK, pp. 494-495
17. KR, pp. 529-534; CK, pp. 503-508
18. KR, pp. 535-537; CK, pp. 513-517
19. KR, pp. 514-543
20. CK, p. 542
21. TA, pp. 25-28
22. KR, p. 554
23. Ibid, p. 559
24. Ibid, pp. 546-547-48
25. Ibid, p. 552
26. CK, p. 532
27. Ibid, p. 532
28. KR, pp. 556-557
29. Ibid, p. 558
30. CK, pp. 534-535
31. Ibid, p. 533
32. DRK, pp. 90-111
33. KR, p. 573
34. Ibid, p. 578
35. KR, p. 581
36. SIH, p. 367

37. CK, pp. 551-552
38. Ibid, p. 553
39. SIH, p. 367

Whose article quoted from this & edited work?

40. RSCP, Vol. I, Letter No. 25-26, p. 42
41. Ibid, Letter No. 12 p. 23
42. Ibid, Letter No. 2,3,4,5, pp. 8-10, 12
43. Ibid, pp. 8, 13
44. Ibid, Letter No. 11, p. 21
45. LTYC, Vol. I, pp. 141-150
46. RSCP, Vol. I, Letter No. 30, pp. 48-54
47. Ibid, pp. 49-54
48. Ibid, Letter No. 38, p. 68
49. Ibid, Letter No. 43, pp. 71-73
50. Ibid, pp. 71-72
51. Ibid, Letter No. 48, p. 76
52. Ibid, Appendix F, p. 88
53. RSC, p. 13
54. RSCP, Appendix F, p. 88
55. Ibid, Letter No. 17, p. 28
56. RSCP, Vol. I, Letter No. 54, pp. 100-101
57. Ibid, p. 109
58. Ibid, Letter No. 54, pp. 109-110
59. Ibid, Letter No. 64-65, p. 119
60. RSCP, Vol. I, Letter No. 65, pp. 119-121
61. Ibid, Letter No. 76, pp. 131-132
62. Ibid, Letter No. 77, p. 132
63. Ibid, Letter No. 77, p. 134
64. Ibid, Letter No. 83, p. 144
65. Ibid, Letter No. 81, p. 140
66. Ibid, Letter No. 83, p. 144
67. RSC, p. 19
68. RSCP, Vol. I, Letter No. 86, p. 147
69. Ibid, Letter No. 89, pp. 152-154
70. Ibid, Letter No. 98, pp. 161-163
71. Ibid, Letter No. 33, p. 72
72. Ibid, p. 63
73. RSC, p. 23
74. RSCP, Vol. I, Letter No. 104, p. 170
75. Ibid, Letter NO. 106, p. 171
76. RSC, p. 21
77. RSCP, Vol. I, Letter No. 116, p. 180

78. Ibid, Letter No. 164, pp. 268-269
79. Ibid, Letter No. 122, p. 186
80. Ibid, Letter No. 147, 148, pp. 232-233
81. Ibid, Letter No. 172, p. 320
82. Ibid, Letter No. 167, p. 272
83. Ibid, Letter No. 176, pp. 325-326
84. Ibid, Letter No. 178, p. 328
85. Ibid, Letter No. 187, p. 332
86. Ibid, Letter No. 190, pp. 334-335
87. Ibid, Letter No. 197, p. 339
88. Ibid, Letter No. 201, 205, pp. 342-344
89. Ibid, Letter No. 208, p. 345
90. Ibid, Letter No. 338, pp. 371 - 372
91. Report on the general administration of the Kolhapur State and its Feudatories, 1892 – 93
92. RSCP, Vol. I, Letter No. 238, pp. 375-376



Shahu at the Foundation Ceremony of the Kolhapur - Miraj Railway

Shahu's Visit to Winchester College, England

Chpter III

Consolidation of Shahu's Power

The Kolhapur State had witnessed a regime of Regency Council for almost past 50 long years. On this background, Shahu had to begin his reign with direction administration. He was 20 and fully equipped with modern education and training under the guardianship of Sir S.M. Fraser for becoming the progressive and liberal ruler. However, his task was not easy and without any odds. For almost five decades, the Political Agent had enjoyed full power as de facto ruler of the State. In the eyes of the people also, he was a powerful imperial officer, stationed at Kolhapur as a representative of the British Government. After the installation, Shahu became a de facto ruler, free to administer the State internally.

Shahu's Limitations and Odds

However, the Raja of Kolhapur had to work under certain limitations imposed by the Treaties and Engagements of the past. He was to rule the State internally and the external affairs of the State, for all practical purpose, were to be in the hands of the British Government. The Raja was to follow the instructions of the British Government and pay allegiance to the Queen Empress of India.

Moreover, the long period of the Regency Council under Minority Rule had lowered the prestige of the State, in consequence of which the feudal Chiefs had taken undue advantage and raised the ambitions undermining the position of their master i.e. the Raja. Lastly, the bureaucracy, upon which the edifice of the State rested, was almost fully manned and controlled by the British, Parsis and Brahmins imported from outside into Kolhapur. The local people, especially the Maratha and other communities, had no share in the administration. Such were the odds against which Shahu had to fight and create a new pathway for implementation of his concept of welfare state.

Shahu's Proclamation

His concept of welfare and happiness of the people had been amply reflected in his first Proclamation issued immediately after his ascending to the Kolhapur throne and assuming full powers of administration on April 2, 1894. Thus runs the Proclamation:

"Be it known to all our subjects of the Kolhapur State that the functions of the Council of Administration which conducted the affairs of the State during our minority rule have been terminated, and we have acceded to the full powers of our State from to-day i.e. 2 April, 1894."

"It is our earnest desire that our subjects should always be happy and contented, that their welfare should increase from day to day and that our State should go on prospering in all its respects. In promoting this object we rely on the most loyal and hearty co-operation of our Jahagirdars, Relatives, Sardars, Mankaris, Inamdars, Kamdars, Mercantile classes of all ranks and all other subjects. We invoke

with undivided attention the blessings of the Ruler of the Universe the Higher Spirit on our career commenced this day that it may last long and prove beneficial"[1]

On ascending to the Gadi of Chhatrapati, Shahu received many letters of congratulations from the British officers both in service and retired to England. With great hopes and best wishes of his friends and well-wishers Shahu took over the reigns of administration. His first bold step was to dissolve the Council of Administration which was an executive body and to turn it into a Council of Advisers. The Diwan of the State was to preside over the new Council and Chief Revenue Officer and Chief Judge were its two members.[2]

Besides this, Shahu created a new office, called the Huzur Office, the secretariat in modern sense. Raghunathrao Sabnis, Shahu's revered teacher, was appointed Huzur Chitnis i.e. the Chief Secretary. He was to supervise the administration of the State.[3]

History Repeats Itself

Soon after the assumption of power, Shahu's rule began to show the signs of benevolence. On April 14, 1894 just 12 days after his installation, he issued a circular about Shikar in the Gazette. Whenever the Raja or any high officials set on Shikhar tour, the Mamledar of the region was asked to provide necessary goods and articles to them. The Mamledar in his turn asked the Police to provide them. The Police used to secure the goods and articles from the poor villagers in the vicinity. At the time of departure of the officials, the clerk usually paid the dues to the villagers. But Shahu doubted whether the Villagers received the money of their articles.

Hence Shahu issued an order that the officials on tour should take all the necessary articles along with him and make on the spot cash payment for the articles purchased from the villagers. Shahu further added that even the Political Agent and other British officials were no exception to this rule. Shahu had applied these rules to his tours also.

It is instructive to note that some 225 years ago Shivaji the Great, Shahu's ancestor, had issued a similar order to the soldiers and officers of his army, prohibiting them to procure the food and fodder from the poor peasants in his State. He had asked them to go directly to the market and purchase the articles they required by making cash payment.[4] It is said History repeats itself. No better example could be found in the annals of Maharashtra than this one in Shahu's reign.

Shahu wanted to raise the moral standard of his administration and also achieve its efficiency to the highest level. He was in constant touch with his Guru Sir Fraser who, in turn, appreciated his methods of clearing official work and keeping punctuality in the administration. In one of his letters from London, Fraser had suggested the ways and means of wielding power of the State.[5]

Shahu's Appeal to the British Government

'Power of life and Death' was one of the important and vital regal powers lost to the British by the Chhatrapatis of Kolhapur under the Treaty of 1862.

Now while consolidating his power as a Raja of Kolhapur Shahu felt fundamentally requisite to regain it. Hence he requested the British Government to confer upon him the said power. Along with this request Shahu also pleaded for restoration of power of jurisdiction on the feudatories of Kolhapur in respect of the residuary criminal jurisdiction by making necessary changes in the Treaty of 1862.

In his letter to Lord Harris, the Governor of Bombay, Shahu writes- "Under Article 7. of the revised agreement of 1862 between the British Government and the Kolhapur State, sentences of death are to be reported to the authority of Government for confirmation. Those were troublous times and since then there has been much change and therefore I restore to my State its former powers in this matter. I believe your Excellency knows that many states that are of much less importance as regards their salute, area, population and revenue have the powers of life and death". [6]

Lord Harris, while promising Shahu that he would speak to the Viceroy in regard to the revision of the Treaty of 1862 says in his letter, "I retain and always shall have an unabated interest in your conduct of the most responsible duties that have devolved upon you and shall always hope that you are continuing as you have begun, to discharge them with an upright regard for the improvement of the condition of your people, and a resolute determination to support the Paramount power with your great hereditary". [7]

The new year's first day (Jan 1, 1895) brought a good news to Shahu declaring that the Queen Empress of India was pleased to confer upon him the title of G.C.S.I i.e. knight Grand Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India. [8]

Shahu's British well wishers such as Lee Warner and Wodehouse congratulated him on the occasion. [9] To Shahu, whose great ancestors were the sovereign kings of the Marathas, such an honour was no great distinction. However, such a move on the part of the British Paramount Power was indicative of the fact that the Paramount Power was slowly recognizing constructive role of an Indian Prince as a pillar of the British Empire.

In February, 1895, Shahu arranged an important function, called 'At Home' at the Council Hall in Poona in the honour of Lord Harris who was going to be retired soon. His second purpose was to cultivate good relations with the elite society of Poona, both the European and Indian. He also visited many public institutions in order to earn the good-will of the Poona Society in general. [10]

In the same month, Shahu went to Bombay to say good-bye to Lord Harris who departed to England on his retirement. Shahu also got an opportunity of welcoming the new Governor Lord Sandhurst and getting acquaintance with him.

In March, Shahu again visited Poona for attending the opening ceremony of the new building of Ferguson College, run by the Deccan Education Society. As the

President of the society Shahu welcomed Lord Sandhurst, the Chief Guest of the function. The Governor addressed the assembly in these words.

"No Government, whatever its resources, can cope single handed with the problems of public education ..... So in the present circumstances of their country the Indians cannot serve it better than supplementing the efforts of Government in the matter of secondary and higher education"..... [11]

Shahu soon received a much awaited letter from the Government of India approving the modification of the clause of the Treaty of 1862 and communicating him that he could wield 'Power of Life and Death' over his subjects [2] Upon this Lord Sandhurst wrote to Shahu. "You have been granted by the Government of India the extension of Powers you desired. On the acquisition of those Powers, I have every hope that they will be used by you with justice and discretion". (July, 23,1895) [13]

This decision of the British Government amply proves that in the eyes of the British Paramount Power Shahu had proved his mettle as an efficient and just ruler and above all a loyal Indian Prince.

Shahu's Relations with the Political Agent

It may not be out of place here to take note of Shahu's relations with the Political Agent who represented the British Paramount Power in Kolhapur and played the role of watchdog. The Political Agent could be of much help to Raja in solving the problems both internal and external especially in connection with Raja's relations to the Paramount Power. On the other hand, the Political Agent could also prove to be a source of trouble and nuisance to the Raja. Shahu as a shrewd ruler knew it well and cultivated friendly relations with the Political Agent. A letter from Political Agent Mr. Salmon on his departure from Kolhapur, throws sufficient light on Shahu's relations with him. He writes,

"I carry away with me the most pleasant recollections of Kolhapur, the time I have spent in it and especially of my connection with yourself personally and the friendly feelings which you have ever shown to me both officially and privately" (August 2, 1895) [14] This officer continued to be in touch with Shahu even after his departure to England. He had congratulated Shahu upon his getting the little of G.C.S.I. [15]

Shahu Honoured by the Governor

On September 2, 1895, the Governor Lord Sandhurst held a Darbar at Poona for investing Shahu with insignia of G.C.S.I. On this occasion, the Governor applauded Shahu and his great ancestor Shivaji, the Great in these words :

"In the person of His Highness we see one of the great remaining representatives of the Maratha Power. His ancestors include the founder of the Maratha Empire, while the history of the Marathas in the time of his ancestors abounds with dazzling deeds of arms and I trust the annals of his time will be no less illustrious, but for different reasons that his rule will be marked by sympathy, justice,

firmness and general development, as His Highness governs his State during the days of peace....." [16]

Then the Governor most eloquently addressed the Darbar in reference to the title of G.C.S.I. and restoration of 'Power of Life and Death' to Shahu. He appealed to Shahu, other Chiefs and Sardars of the Deccan to promote the cause of education in all its branches and provide medical relief to their subjects in their respective territories. [17]

It is evident from the above speech of the Governor that in the galaxy of Indian Prices Shahu occupied a very special position by virtue of his being the descendant of Shivaji the Great, the founder of the Maratha Empire. What is more important was the British Paramount Power had not hesitated to recognize it.

A very interesting contemporary document, dated November 4, 1895 which is a note prepared by an official of Kolhapur Darbar, elucidates the above view further. It says –

"Kolhapur will not be behind even the most advanced Native States in the good work which native rulers can achieve. In one respect, indeed, the Maharajah occupies a position to which no other Maratha Ruler can lay claim. His Highness is at present the only direct ruling representative of the great Shivaji. (Immortal Shivaji, as Lord Harris called him), and as such he holds, in the estimation of the Maratha population at any rate, a rank far higher than even that of the Gaekwar or Scindia or Holkar. The Kolhapur Gadi was founded, by the widow of the younger son of Shivaji, and after a somewhat prolonged struggle its independence was acknowledged by the senior branch at Satara and its powerful minister the Peshwa at Poona. After the recognition the Peshwa and those who acknowledged his authority, including Scindia, Holkar and even the Gaekwar addressed the occupants of the Kolhapur Gadi in the same respectful terms, which they applied to their nominal master at Satara. And when the wave of annexation which passed over the land about the middle of this century submerged the Satara Gadi, Kolhapur alone remained to represent the house and recall the traditions of the great founder of the Maratha Empire." [18]

The views, expressed in the Governor's speech and in the note of Kolhapur Darbar, are identical and no doubt reflect the general feelings of the people at large in the Deccan.

Governor's Visits to Kolhapur

Soon, the visit of the Governor to Kolhapur followed on October 25, 1895. Shahu gave a State Banquet in his honour in the Town Hall. He spoke very high about Governor's visit, pointing out that such visits not only strengthen the ties of friendship between the rulers of Native States and the Paramount Power, but they also served to give opportunity to the Representative of the Queen Empress to see how the Native States were making progress in various fields. [19]

In reply to Shahu's expression of friendship, the Governor fully agreed to his views, saying that such visits would go far towards cementing the relations between the Representative of the Paramount Power and the Rulers of Native States[20]

During his stay at Kolhapur the Governor, alongwith Shahu, visited the important places like Kalamba Tank, Ambabai Temple and Rankala Tank and also the institutions like Girls High School, Training School for Lady Teachers, Technical School and Albert Hospital. The Governor expressed his satisfaction over the working of these public institutions in Kolhapur.[21]

In his private interview with the Governor, Shahu had promised to write about his relations with his feudatories. Accordingly, on November 3, 1895, he wrote a letter to him stating that there were eight Feudatories in all; four of them had much larger estates than the rest and therefore were looked upon as principal feudatories. During Minority period they had been invested with larger power, while the remaining four enjoyed lesser powers. Shahu wished to treat the lesser feudatories more liberally. After giving some details regarding his relations with them, Shahu eventually appealed to the Governor to restore to him the residuary criminal jurisdiction in the feudatory States which had been then exercised by the Political Agent since the Treaty of 1862.[22]

In February. 1896, Shahu had organized Cattle and Horse Show at Chinchali in his State and invited the Governor Lord Sandhurst to inaugurate the same. To this great influx of guests Shahu had invited many British officers such as Major Owen, Military Secretary, Mr. Heaton, Private Secretary, Colonel and Mrs. Hunter, Mr. Nugent, Mr. & Mrs. Jacob, Mr. & Mrs. Wray and many others for the exhibition. On this occasion, Shahu wanted to exhibit the agricultural progress made by his peasant subjects. Since installation he had given stimulus to them to improve upon their rough methods of husbandry, and the implements for agricultural purposes. Shahu wished the European guests should witness it and carry back his memories as a capable and enlightened ruler.

On March 26, 1896, Mr. J.W. Wray was appointed the Political Agent of Kolhapur. Incidently, a week later Lee Warner from India office, London, wrote a letter to Shahu, advising him on his relations with the Political Agent. He said that Shahu need not fear anything so long as he can always speak to the Political Agent himself whenever he is in doubt. He further cautions Shahu that he should never believe the hearsay reports, but simply go and ask him his views direct, thus avoiding the misunderstanding between him and the Agent. [23] Lee Warner's letter is a fine example of how a British official of noble soul had the kind of feeling of friendliness and good will towards Shahu.

Consolidation of Administrative Power

A reference has already been made to the bureaucratic machinery of the Kolhapur State, which was fully manned and dominated by the outsiders i.e. the

Europeans, Anglo Indians, Parasis, Prabhus, Shenvis and Brahmins. To name the few, Europeans and Parasis Mr. Shannon was the Executive Engineer, Dr. Sinclair was the Principal of Rajaram College, Miss Little was Lady Superintendent in Education Department, Mr. Taraporewalla was the Diwan of the State. Mr. Dorabji Pattonjee was the Chief of Police. Both in State service and the Khasgi the Brahmins were in majority. At the time of Shahu's installation, there were 60 Brahmin and 11 non-Brahmin officers in the State Service, whereas in the Khasgi (private service of the King) there were 45 Brahmins and 7 non-Brahmins. Here, it should be noted that non-Brahmin means the Europeans, Parasis, Prabhus etc. and not the Marathas. Indigenous people of Kolhapur, especially the Marathas and other communities like the Jains and the Lingayats had no share either in the State Service or the Khasgi.

While consolidating his administrative power of the State, Shahu wanted to slowly abolish the Brahmin monopoly and dominance and bring non-Brahmin elements into the State machinery. His first appointment was that of Raghunathrao Sabnis (Prabhu) as the Huzur Chitnis in 1894. The second one was the appointment of Bhaskarrao Jadhav (Maratha) as Assistant Sarsubhe in 1895. This was followed by the appointment of Daji Amrutrao Vichare (Maratha) as an Executive Engineer in the place of Mr. Shannon in 1896. These are some of the examples of appointments of non-Brahmins Shahu had made during the period under review.

The above steps of Shahu naturally annoyed the Brahmin community in Maharashtra in general and Kolhapur in particular. It created unrest amongst the Brahmins who started criticizing Shahu and his new administrative policies. However, the Government of Bombay not only appreciated Shahu's policies, but tried to boost his morale. For example the Governor Lord Sandhurst writes, "Men in places of high responsibility like yourself very often find themselves in position in which their action calls forth considerable and sometimes sharp criticism from some portion of the public and press. It is very unpleasant and trying. It is, however, to be expected at times. We cannot hope to please everybody, and all we can do is to try to continue to do our duty to the best of our ability despite a wave of criticism that may arise."

Famine and Plague

In the last quarter of the year 1896 the Kolhapur State had to face the worst type of famine. However, Shahu relentlessly worked day and night to tide over the serious situation wrought by famine and saved his subjects from destruction. [24] Shahu had to undergo another ordeal soon. The famine was followed by a terrible epidemic of plague which broke out early in 1896 in Bombay and later on spread over Karachi, Bhivandi and Poona. The epidemic entered Kolhapur territory in 1898. But Shahu had taken all possible precautionary measures such as Quarantine Camp, disinfections of the houses, rehabilitation of the epidemically affected villages

to check the invasion of plague. Shahu measures proved largely successful. The epidemic could not play havoc as it did in the British territory. That was not a small achievement of Shahu as an administrator. We find that the British officers had congratulated him for his Herculean efforts to save his subjects.

It is interesting to note that the British Government had issued a notification in the name of Queen Empress Victoria that the Government had imposed ban on Haj Pilgrimage for the year 1897 due to prevalence of plague in India, lest the epidemic should spread to the European countries. The notification, sent by the Bombay Government, was published in the Kolhapur Gazette for information of the Muslims in Kolhapur State.[25] It should be noted here that the British Government, which was so keen on arresting the spread of Plague on the European territories, is not found, in any of the contemporary documents, helping Shahu in his combat against plague in Kolhapur.

In June 1897, 60th anniversary i.e. Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne was celebrated throughout the British Empire. In 1877 the Queen had assumed the title 'the Empress of India'. Shahu held a special Darbar on June 21, at the New Palace which was attended by his feudatories, Mankaris and officials. The Political Agent Wray read the Kharita (Letter) from the Viceroy Lord Elgin in which he had applauded the benefits of her Majestys' reign such as progress of knowledge, great discoveries, peace and prosperity. To the above Kharita from the Viceroy, Shahu sent a reply, praising the Victorian Age in the following words: "The Victorian age has been an era of continued progress both in England and India and marvelous changes and improvements, achieved in all departments of modern thought during Her Majesty's most glorious and ever memorable reign, make it as the greatest epoch of advancement."[26]

Shahu also sent a congratulatory message to the Queen Empress, praying for prolongation of her beneficient reign and expressing the "most profound veneration and unswerving loyalty to the Crown."[27]

Thus since Shahus' coming to power, his relation with the British Government had been very cordial. But some times, some British officials happened to create complications and trouble in Kolhapur, which eventually caused some uneasiness on the part of Shahu. Mr. Candy, the Principal of Rajaram College, and Lt. Col. Wray were such British officials. However, before turning to Wray's historic complication, we should make passing reference to that of Mr. Candy.

Mr. Candy, once Shahu's teacher at Rajkot College, was then the Principal of Rajaram College. Shahu had no good opinion about him, nor he deserved it. Because he was rude and intriguous. He had insulted the official at Huzur office by sending an insolent letter, for which he had to apologize later. He was scheming fellow, circulating false reports about Shahu in the Europeans circle. Candy had trouble with the Political Agent Wray also. Shahu was shrewd enough to play Wray against Candy and occasionally report Candy's misbehavior to the

Governor. Eventually, in May 1898 Shahu had to request the Governor to send a suitable officer form the Education Department to replace Mr. Candy. The Governor accepted the request and sent Mr. J.F. Adair to replace Candy who was sent to Berar to pass his days in peace.

Shahu and Wray Poison Case

Shahu had to suffer a lot due to the Political Agent Lt. Col. Wray. The issue that Wray created during his tenure was an acid test for Shahu. It was also political calamity for Shahu, which came up as a threat to Kolhapur Gadi. Through the case of Wray's food poisoning Shahu grew matured as a courageous and politically skillful ruler.

It is already seen that Wray was appointed as the Political Agent of Kolhapur in March 1896. Wray and Shahu were acquainted with each other much before that. In the beginning, they had such a cordial relationship that in one of the letters of the Darbar, Wray is described in good words. He was a young and inexperienced officer.

Wray had sent greetings to Shahu for his rule and also for their friendship in his letter on the 4th anniversary of Shahu's installation on April 2,1898. [28] He had also thanked Shahu in one of his letters for helping him at Shirol camp and for lending a car to his friend Col. Kennedy.[29] This shows that till this period Shahu - Wray relations were quite smooth. But Wray's method of administration was very provocative. He was an eccentric and a snobbish person. His arrogant and short tempered nature had created conflicts even with Prin. Kandy, Darbar Surgeon Sinclair, and Diwan Taraporewalla.

There had been at constant conflict between Political Agent Wray and Diwan Taraporewalla. In one such conflict, Taraporewalla and Wray stood strongly against each other. An assistant Surgeon was to be appointed at Albert Memorial Hospital. Wray wanted to appoint Dr. Dev, whereas Taraporewalla wanted a Parshi person on this post. Shahu wanted neither Taraporewalla nor Wray. So he played a move and asked Taraporewalla to appoint a person of his choice. Shahu was sure that Taraporewalla would take this opportunity to appoint a Parshi person only and he did the same. Instead of appointing Dr. Dev, he appointed Rustumji Palamji, a Parshi Doctor and invited the wrath of Wray. Wray thought that this appointment must have been done with the consent of the Maharaja. So he sent Taraporwalla on a compulsory leave before retirement and this led to the conflict between Shahu and Wray. Their common friend and advisor to the Governor Nuzant tried to settled the issue. But Wray was quite adamant in his attitude. The long standing prejudices between Wray and Shahu, thus, culminated into the 'Wray food poisoning case.'

On August, 5, 1899, Mr. James, a member of Bombay Executive Council arrived at Kolhapur.[30] A banquet under the supervision of Wray and his wife was arranged at the Darbar Hall in the same evening. Wray received an anonymous

letter on the morning of the same day which informed him of a plot to poison him by D.C. Fernandes.

It is necessary to know the background of Wray-Fernandes relationship here. Fernandes was a lawyer in the State and he had complained against Wary to the Darbar in the beginning of 1898. As revenge Wray cancelled his Sanad to practice in Agency Court on the pretext of his misconduct.

When Shahu came to know of the anonymous letter to Wray, he suggested him to cancel the banquet or to ask the Government Police to supervise the party, But Wray dismissed both these suggestions, he made all the arrangements of the banquet with the help of his former butler Philip. Nobody knew of the precautions that Wray had taken during the party. At the time of the banquet Wray asked to substitute all the breads in all plates by the ones he had brought.

The banquet took place without any mishap. Wray sent some pieces of the bread earlier put in the plates to the Forensic lab at Bombay. None of them had poison in it, however, some small pieces of glass and sand were reported to be found in one pair of bread.[31]

There were signs that case was going to be target Shahu. His very existence as 'Raja' could have been endangered. It has got a background of one such case at Badoda in 1875 in which the Political Agent there was poisoned through fruit juice at the time of such a Darbar banquet. The British Government had set up an enquiry commission and on the recommendations of that commission had dethroned the then Maharaja Malharrao Gaikwad. Now Wray was threatening Shahu to set up one such enquiry commission. He also came to the conclusion that since the Darbar was not putting Fernandes behind the bars, he even doubted the role of the Darbar in the case.[32]

Shahu Faces the Case Courageously

Shahu decided to face this problem with courage and patience. He started enquiring this issue from its very beginning. But Wray threatened him that if this issue got publicized, it might defame the Darbar. But Shahu diplomatically replied that they should not allow any room for suspicion in this case. Even if the Darbar faced defamy, the guilty should not be acquitted. If he be acquitted he would dare do such things again. Strict measures were necessary in such case.[33]

Wray had tried to involve Mr. Pore and Kirtikar, the persons in the State service, alongwith Fernandes in this case. Meanwhile, Shahu appealed to the Bombay Government to appoint an experienced police officer to enquire into the case. Accordingly a British Police officer Guenon arrived at Kolhapur in the first week of September 1899 and started the enquiry. As per his instructions, Shahu sent Kirtikar on 6 months compulsory leave.[34] Wray had constantly been asking Guenon and the Chief Revenue Officer Shirgaokar to arrest Fernandes. But both of them refused to arrest him without any sound evidence.[35] At last Shahu had to yield to the pressure of Wray and had to arrest Fernandes. The bakery owner Baba Maras was

also arrested. But far from being contended with this, Wray insisted on dismissing some of the Darbar officers too. This created a feeling of anxiety in the Darbar.[36] In the meanwhile, Guenon discovered the truth that it was Philip, Wray's Butler, who had replaced the original bread pieces in the plate by the ones with pieces of glass and sand.

Mr. Brewin's Findings

As the possibility of reaching to the real culprit increased, there happened one more thing that added fuel to the fire. It was one more anonymous letter to Wray in which it was said that some Maratha officers in the Darbar and Shahu's brother Bapusaheb Maharaj were together hatching a conspiracy to kill Wray.[37]

Shahu became very unhappy with this news, but he did not loose his patience. He requested the British Government to send an expert detective officer to investigate the charge and a Sessions Judge to try the episode in the event of trial being necessary. Mr and Mrs. Wray opposed this request secretly. However, the Governor of Bombay, Lord Sandhurst, did send a Police officer, Mr. Brewin.[38] Brewin was an Anglo-Indian and was known for his intelligence. He had succeeded in unearthing evidences in many important cases. So Wray tried hard to wind up the case before Brewin arrived. But Shahu did not allow his plan to succeed. He told his officers to postpone the case for further remand. Then Brewin started his enquiry on October,6,1899.[39] He investigated the case fearlessly refusing to surrender to the pressure of Wray and ultimately acquitted Fernandes for being not guilty as there was no evidence against him. Brewin sent his report to Bombay Government in November, 1899. He had made it clear that there was not a grain of truth in the story that Wray was conspired to be poisoned to death.

This was the plot against Fernandes to destroy him and to expel him out of Kolhapur. Brewin's reports revealed that, Wray's butler Philip was the prime mover in the conspiracy. No one from the Darbar nor any Sardar was involved in it.[40] Though Brewin did not mention Wray's name in the report particularly, Wray dissented from the report and approached Edgerley with his version of the episode. Shahu also met the Governor who promised Shahu that Wray would leave Kolhapur in March 1900 and would never again be sent back.

Thus Shahu succeeded, at last, in defeating the Political Agent, a representative of British Power. However, during the case, Shahu had to undergo tremendous tension and face a great ordeal. It was only on account of his diplomatic skill and patience that Shahu could outgrow all the machination of Wray. Shahu's European friends including his tutor Fraser, his friend Nugent and the Governor himself stood by him during this ordeal. It is observed that the Brahmins in Kolhapur had adopted hostile stance during this case.[41]

Thus it became crystal clear that Shahu was totally innocent in the case and Wray himself had engineered the conspiracy to poison him, simply to take revenge on Fernandes.

So far as role of the British Government is concerned, it seems that the Government had always been cooperative to Shahu in this case right from the beginning. Shahu's demand for a Police officer and a Sessions Judge sufficiently proved his innocence in this case. The Government of Bombay, exhibiting a sense of justice, extended full co-operation in settling the problem.

The British investigating officer Brewin had definitely come to the conclusion that Wray had a scheming hand in this entire episode. But he didn't mention it overtly in his report. He held only Wray's butler Phillip responsible for the entire conspiracy. This shows that how so ever principled officer Mr Brewin appeared to be, he displayed his loyalty to the British Paramount Power by shielding Wray in this case. And the only punishment the Bombay Government gave to Wray was that he was asked to go on furlough and not to return to Kolhapur.

After Wray, Mr. Jackson took over the charge of Political Agent. Similarly in December, 1899, Sir Stafford Northcoté was appointed the Governor in place of Lord Sandhurst. [42]

Shahu's Relations with British Officers

In a letter to Fraser on 27 December, 1899, Shahu informed about his relations with the officers in the Political Department, Bombay and that he had been dealing with the Political Agent and the Governor very carefully. However, he had felt the need to personally present some issues before the Governor only in an appropriate manner. Though it was a difficult task, Shahu believed in the rightness of his attitude. Shahu further wrote that he saw no reason for Sir Charles and Mr. Edgerlay to get hurt since sometimes he had maintained direct contacts with the Governor and had interviews with him, this might have been the cause that they had got hurt. [43] This letter clearly shows there had been constant fluctuations in the relationships between Shahu and the British officers.

Shahu wrote a similar letter to Mr. Edgerly, the member of Political Department, Bombay. He had explained his way of maintaining relations with the Political Agent. He writes, "I never wanted nor do I wish to fall out with the Political Agent and you are, I believe, aware what my relations had been with Col. Wray's predecessors and even with Col. Wray himself till this unfortunate poison case cropped up. In this case too I did my best to please Col. Wray and I wrote to you as soon as there was difference of opinion between him and me on important points and you know what course of things have been taking since that time. I should have liked very much to explain personally how I was constrained by the conduct of Col. Wray to take the various steps I had recourse to. You would then have realized my position and been able to suggest how I should shape my future conduct." [44]

Shahu's feelings expressed in this letter clearly indicate his plainness of mind and aptness of action in Wray episode. Shahu had also convinced Nugent, Fraser and Sandhurst as well as the British officers connected with this case of his position in the episode. Consequently, the British Government stood firmly by Shahu's side in this case. Shahu had cordial relations with the new Political Agent, Jackson. However, Jackson's tenure ended in June 1900. While leaving Kolhapur he had thanked Shahu for his kindness and cooperation.[45] All the Political Agents of Kolhapur except Wray, had shared the similar kind of feeling of gratefulness to Shahu. Jackson was followed by Col. Sealy as the Political Agent of Kolhapur.[46]

On 23 May 1900 Shahu received a letter from the office of the Private Secretary to the Governor which conveyed that Shahu was conferred the hereditary title of 'Maharaja' on the occasion of the Queen's birthday.[47]

Shahu opened the first Boarding House for the Maratha students in the following year. While emphasizing on the need to start such a boarding house, Shahu's European friend Mr. Giles wrote to Shahu from Pune, that the Maratha community did not relish the habit and sentiments for education and that he was fulfilling the long felt need of education by providing boarding facility to the Maratha community.[48]

Thus Shahu's every progressive action was noticed by the British officers outside the State. They used to appreciate it by sending letters of appreciation and encouragements.

References and Footnotes

1. RSCP, Vol. II, Letter No. 31, p. 42
2. RSC, p. 43
3. RSCP, Vol. II, Letter 2, p.2
4. CSMP, pp. 156-158
5. RSCP, Vol. II, Letter No. 7, 20, pp. 9, 25
6. Ibid, Letter No. 28, p. 38
7. Ibid, Letter No. 29, p. 40
8. Ibid, Letter No. 31, p. 44
9. Ibid, Letter No. 32, 34, 43, pp. 47, 48, 59
10. Ibid, Letter No. 31, pp. 43-44
11. TI, 28 March 1895
12. RSCP, Vol. II, Letter No. 60, p. 80
13. Ibid, Letter No. 76, p. 95
14. Ibid, Letter No. 79, p. 99
15. Ibid, Letter No. 121, p. 145
16. Ibid, Letter No. 91, pp. 111-112
17. Ibid, Letter No. 128, p. 155
18. Ibid, Letter No. 101, pp. 123-126
19. Ibid, Letter No. 128, p. 156
20. Ibid, p. 156
21. Ibid, p. 157
22. Ibid, Letter No. 99, pp. 120-121
23. Ibid, Letter No. 140, p. 177
24. RSC, p. 66
25. RSCP, Vol. II, Letter No. 158, p. 250
26. Ibid, Letter No. 172, p. 275
27. Ibid, Letter No. 172, p. 276
28. Ibid, Letter No. 176, p. 281
29. Ibid, Letter No. 177, p. 282
30. SSM, p. 106
31. RSCP, Vol. II, Letter No. 204, p. 325
32. RSC, p. 73
33. RSCP, Vol. II, Letter 202, p. 323
34. Ibid, Letter No. 206,207,208,pp. 328-328
35. RSC, p. 73
36. Ibid, pp. 73-74
37. SSM, p. 111
38. RSCP, Vol. II, Letter No. 212, p. 333

39. RSC, p. 74
40. RSCP, Vol. II, Letter No. 219, p. 341
41. RSC, p. 76
42. RSCP, Vol. II, Letter No. 231, p. 354
43. Ibid, Letter No. 232, p. 356
44. Ibid, Letter No. 241, p. 368
45. Ibid, Letter No. 281, p. 705
46. Ibid, Letter No. 286, p. 412
47. Ibid, Letter No. 270, p. 395
48. Ibid, Letter No. 290, p. 417

Chapter IV

The Controversy of Vedokta

'The Vedokta' in Shahu life is very significant event, which created turmoil not only in his life but also in the socio-religious atmosphere of entire Maharashtra. Shahu's victory in the Vedokta gave impetus to the movement of social and religious equality in Maharashtra. The study of this episode is important for comprehending Shahu's life as well as the relations between him and the British. It is because of the firm support of the British to Shahu in this case for five long years; that he could overcome the adversity. It is the British-British relation that largely contributed to the socio-religious transformation in the Kolhapur State.

The Beginning of The Vedokta

The Vedokta issue began in October 1899, when one day Shahu went to the river Panchaganga at dawn for his holy bath. He was accompanied by his brother Bapusaheb Maharaj, Mamasaheb Khanwilkar and an the intellectual reformist Rajaram Shastri Bhagwat. A priest Narayan Shastri was also present there to recite some Mantras. He started chanting them as Shahu started his bath. Meanwhile, it was found by Rajaram Shastri that Narayan Shastri was chanting the Puranokta Mantras instead of 'Vedokta' and that he was doing that without taking bath himself. Rajaram Shastri brought these things to the notice of Shahu. When Shahu asked explanation for this, Narayan Shastri very arrogantly answered back, 'The Shudras are entitled to 'Puranokt' Mantras only'. Shahu, however, showed great composure and told Narayan Shastri that he hails from the Kshatriya family . But Narayan Shastri shamelessly declared that unless and until the almighty Brahmins proclaimed him as Kshatriya, he would continue to be a Shudra. Narayan Shastri's explanation fell upon Shahu as a bolt from the blue. Shivaji the Great, founder of the Maratha Empire, was declared in 1674 as the 'Kshatriyakulavatansa' i.e. the crest of the Kshatriyas and Shahu was his descendant. Narayan Shastri had refused to accept this historical truth.

The right of Vedokta (the right to conduct all the 16 Sanskaras and other religious rituals with Vedic Mantras) had conventionally been granted to three Varnas excluding the Shudras. However, with the passage of time, the Brahmins overpowered the other two Varnas, namely Kshatriya and Vaishya and degraded them as the Shaudras only. Naturally, the right to Vedokta came to be restricted to the Brahmins only. For that purpose the myths such as 'Parashuram had destroyed all the Kshatriyas for 21 times from the earth' or 'All the Kshatriya families vanished with the Nandas in Ancient India' were constructed by the Brahmins. Such myths naturally led to the belief that the Brahmins were the highest and most superior Varna of all. This Brahminical theory was first challenged by Shivaji the Great in 1674, later by Pratapsingh Maharaja of Satara in 1835 and by Maharaja Sayajirao

Gaikwad of Badoda in 1896. All these three great men successfully struggled for their Vedokta right and they won it. Now, it was Shahu's turn.

The Vedokta issue had much been debated on all these three occasions, however, it could never turn into a social struggle. These three Kshtriya rulers achieved their own right of Vedokta, however, none of them tried to acquire it for the common Marathas. But it was Shahu who fought the Brahmins for the Vedokta right not for himself only but for the entire Maratha Community at large.

On the occasion of the Vedokta outburst, Shahu was 25. Though the arrogance of a Brahmin priest deeply offended him at heart, he did not lose composure. He decided to fight back with patience. But the same patience was not seen in the Brahmins. Some of the Brahmin leaders like Prof. Vishnu Govind Vijapurkar tried utmost to prove how Shahu had never been a Kshatriya and, therefore, could never be entitled to the right of Vedokta. Such attitude naturally created discontent amongst all the Marathas, which ultimately culminated into the conflict of Vedokta. This Vedokta conflict was intensified by one more issue i.e. Tai Maharaj case.

The Vedokta Issue Aggravated

In August 1901, Tilak visited Kolhapur in connection with the 'Tai Maharaj issue'. During his visit Tilak discussed the Vedokta with the Brahmins in Kolhapur. Tilak had opposed the right of Vedokta even to the Maharaja of Baroda. It was no wonder that he supported the views of the Brahmins in Kolhapur; further intensifying the controversy. The British Government, had a close eye on every happening of this issue. On July 12, 1902, The Governor of Bombay, Northacote, writes to the Secretary of State for India, "The matter was apparently passing off quietly when Mr. Tilak, who had gone to Kolhapur in connection with an adoption case in the family of the late Baba Maharaj which was then before the District Judge of Poona and in connection with which there are now charges of perjury and forgery against him, finding the question of adoption settled in the opposition to his wishes in the matter, intervened and stiffened the agitators against His Highness the Maharaja and gained advocates for them in Poona, thus making the question a more general and a sort of trial obtained between Brahmins and Marathas." [1] Thus, the issue of Vedokta at Kolhapur was aggravated by Prof. Vijapurkar in first place and Tilak in the second. Vijapurkar started criticizing Shahu severely through his journal 'Granthmala' which was actually aided and funded by Shahu himself. He also started organizing the Brahmin community against Shahu. So Shahu stopped the aid to the 'Granthamala' from June 1901.[2]

There were many more episodes responsible to keep the fire of Vedokta burning. Firstly, a sincere and dedicated priest Narayan Bhatt Sevekari was excommunicated by the Brahmins in Kolhapur, because he performed the rituals of Marathas such as 'Shravani' and renewal ceremony with Vedic Mantras.

Later, Shahu's adoptive mother Anandibai Ranisaheb's funeral rites were denied to be performed in Vedic manner by the Brahmins. The same night, some part of Shahu's Old Palace was set on fire by some conspiring Brahmins. But the most shocking case took place when the chief priest of the Darbar (Royal Priest), Appasaheb Rajopadhye evaded to perform the religious rituals in the Palace with Vedic Mantras. When this came to the notice, the Darbar issued Mulki order in the name of Rajopadhye on October he was warned not to neglect his duties as the Royal Priest. Since Rajopadhye was supported by the Brahmins in Kolhapur, he did not succumb to the warning of the Darbar. In the second order, he was asked whether he was willing to perform all the ceremonies of the Royal Family in Vedic form.[3]

Meanwhile, the Brahmins in Kolhapur, appealed to Shahu to prohibit Narayan Shastri to perform any holy rites at the Ambabai Temple. Shahu did not pay any heed to this appeal and asked Narayan Shastri to continue his worship as usual. So the infuriated Brahmins lodged a written complaint against Shahu to Col. Seally, the Political Agent, saying 'Shahu had been interfering in their religious rights'. On this Col. Seally replied that he could not interfere in the religious matter and that Shahu was the ultimate authority in this matter. The entire Brahmin class got infuriated by this stance of the Political Agent. Tilak wrote two editorials in the 'Kesari' venting the boiling anger of the Kolhapur Brahmins. Tilak openly opposed Shahu and supported the Brahmins.

He writes, "If an Indian Prince is misusing his powers, he will have to be accountable to the British Paramount Power. It is the duty of the Paramount Power to take the cognizance of the conflicts in the Native States and to see to it that they are not aggravated. ----------If people had to seek help of the Paramount Power to resolve their conflict, it is a clear proof of the inability and incompetence of the Princes to rule with a reformed administrative system".[4] In the end Tilak had appealed to the Government to check the behavior of the rulers of the Native States.

Once again on November, 8, 1901 Shahu asked Rajopadhye to perform the religious rites in the Vedic manner. This was Shahu's third warning to him. But Rajopadhye remained unwavered. At the same time, the Acting Secretary of Governor of Bombay, C.H.Hill praised Shahu's stand against the Brahmins and their superiority complex. He also instructed that all the newspapers and individuals opposing Shahu be dealt with stern measures. [5]

Hill's stand undoubtedly revealed that the British Government would support Shahu in this matter. After the retirement of Col. Sealy as Political Agent on November, 30, 1901, Col. Williams Butler Ferris joined as Political Agent of Kolhapur. [6] He had earlier worked on different posts in the office of the Political Agent at Kolhapur. Shahu was familiar with his good nature and style of administration. It was a positive sign for Shahu, that Ferris took charge as the new Political Agent.

It was necessary for Shahu to have the support and trust of the British Government in the Vedokta case. Hence, he kept on informing his position about Vedokta and its various happenings to the British officers and his friends from time to time. In his letter on April, 16, 1902 to Mr. Edgerlery, the Secretary of State for India, Shahu writes about the co-operation extended by Col. Sealy and Sir Charles Allivant to him in the Vedokta case. He also had expressed his deep satisfaction towards the British Government for always standing by his side.[7] Similarly he had also thanked Sir Charles Allivant for his strong support.[8]

Rajopadhye Watan Confiscated

Rajopadhye never budged at all, despite several orders by the Kolhapur Darbar. At last on May, 1, 1902 the Darbar issued a show cause notice to Rajopadhye. This notice asks why he should not be removed from the hereditary office of the Rajopadhye as he had refused to perform the religious rites in the Royal Palace in Vedokta manner in spite of oral and written orders issued to him to that effect.[9]

As there was no change in Rajopadhye's attitude despite this last notice, Shahu issued an order on May, 6, 1902 to confiscate the Vatans and Inams of Rajopadhye and to dismiss him from the post of Rajopadhye.

This order highlighted the following three points :

1) Rajopadhye was removed from his office of family priest.
2) Inams and landed property given to his family as Rajopadhye were confiscated.
3) Revenue, civil and criminal powers exercised by him in his estate were withdrawn.[10]

Almost six month period passed since the first notice was issued to Rajopadhye was issued. Shahu utilized these six months to collect different evidences regarding the Kshatriya's right to Vedokta from several places such as Tanjore, Satara, Udaipur, Nagpur and Baroda. During this period, he also appointed two learned Brahmins to trace the history of Vedokta in Kolhapur. It was then found that all the rituals in the Royal family had been performed in Vedic manner. However, this tradition was discontinued in Babasaheb Maharaja's time. His priest Raghunath Shastri Parvate took advantages of his ignorant and superstitious nature. He was told that it was because of the Vedokta rituals in the palace that all his issues had met untimely death. Thus the Raja was bullied into accepting the Puranokta rituals. This had been in practice for the last 30 years during the period of minority. Shahu had to face the same.[11]

In his letter to Mr. Edgerley on May, 12, 1902, Shahu had tried to convince him of his Kshatriya origin by referring to the historical evidences he had discovered.[12] This clearly shows that Shahu did not fight for the Vedokta because of his obstinate nature. He sincerely tried to reach to the roots of the issue.

Rajopadhye did not pay any heed to the notices of Shahu for six months but as soon as his Vatans and Imams were confiscated he very promptly sent his reply, to the Kolhapur Darbar, incorporating as many as arguments he could make. He had remained firm on his stand. [13]

Shahu also consficated the imams of Rs. 50,000/- of the Shankaracharya Math and those of all the Brahmins who refused to perform the rituals in Vedic manner. Meanwhile, Shahu published his proclamation of 50 percent reservation in the government and Khasgi services of the State for the backward classes in 1902. The Brahmin Class in the entire Maharashtra got infuriated due to these actions of Shahu and they all stood united against him in the Vedokta struggle.

Though Rajopadhye had made certain arguments against the notice of the Darbar, he had by then realized that his position and his powers would never be entrusted to him again. So he then changed his stand and requested Shahu on June, 28, 1902 to withdraw the order of Darbar against him and to return powers and Inams. [14] However, the Darbar issued an order on September, 10, 1902, rejecting his request. [15]

The British Support to Shahu

The British Government was happy with Shahu's strong action against the Brahmins. The Government had also promised Shahu to support him fully against all these intrigues. Because it was the Brahmin class which was always in the forefront in spreading discontent against the British amongst the masses.[16] During Shahu's visit to England, Fraser also expressed his satisfaction over his strong action against the Brahmins and assured him that the British Government would take care of his interests in his absence from his State. [17]

One of the reasons why the British Government had always supported Shahu was that he had constantly kept the British officers informed about the Vedokta matter and had taken them in confidence. For example, after returning from England, Shahu informed Lee Warner on October, 12, 1902, about the intentions of the Brahmins to create a great stir in Kolhapur and also about the the report regarding the suspected cause of recent fire in the Old Palace. [18]

He also informed Mr. McNeil in his letter on October, 17, 1902 about the fire in the Old Palace and also about the proposed plan of the Brahmins to raise the issue in the British Parliament and if necessary to take the matters even to the Liberal Party when it would come to power. [19]

This shows the stubbornness of the Kolhapur Brahmins to take the issue of Vedokta to the British Parliament and to wait for the Liberal Party to come to power. Shahu was not worried of these machinations of the Brahmins, because he was aware that they had made many such appeals against the rulers of Gwalior, Baroda and Dewas which were later rejected by the British Government. [20] He used to give prior information to the British officers of all these Brahminic moves. Shahu

had written many such letters to Mr. Edgerely and Sir Hill informing them about the of the Vedokta Controversy. In one of his letters to Mr. Edgerely Shahu had informed him that an agent of Tilak had come to see Rajopadhye and some local pleaders and Prof. Vijapurkar had been helping Rajopadhye against the Kolhapur Darbar.[21]

Rajopadhe's Petitions Rejected

By now Rajopadhye realizing his inability to move Shahu regarding his request, approached the British Paramount Power. He appealed almost everybody from the Political Agent to the Governor General. He made his first appeal to the Political Agent Col. Ferris on Jan. 9, 1903. He requested Ferris to advise Shahu to return the land and Inams as well as his civil, criminal and revenue powers back to him.[22]

Col. Ferris declared his decision on February, 19, 1903 after giving a careful thought to Rajopadhye's request petition. He said that despite Shahu's several written orders to Rajopadhye, he had not performed his duty. Therefore, it was not unfair to deprive him of his rights and land. Finally Col. Ferris says, "After a careful consideration of the petitions of the applicant and all the circumstances of the case, I can find nothing that would warrant my interference with the legitimate authority and power of the Maharaja and I therefore, reject the application."[23]

After Col. Ferris's decision against Rajopadhye, he made a petition to the Governor of Bombay. On May, 23, 1903, in which he had repeated the same arguments and requests that had been made to the Political Agent. The prayers of the petitions were ----

1) That he should be restored to the office of Rajopadhye and its perquisites be continued as before,
2) That all his property now resumed be restored,
3) That his Revenue, Civil and Criminal powers be restored to him,
4) That the attachment of the records, and the watch kept in his dwelling house as a permanent indignity and nuisance should be ordered to be removed at once and all his books, papers and other records being his private property should be restored to him at once.
5) That he should be restored to his hereditary rank of a Sardar of the State.[24]

On the background of Rajopadhye's petition to the Governor. Shahu informed Fraser about the Vedokta movement that the discontent of the Brahmins had been aggravated and that they were bitterly criticizing Shahu's administration and his caste. Even the decline of Tilak's reputation was blamed on the Kolhapur Darbar. However, Shahu, while expressing his faith in the support of the Government, says, " I conscientiously believe that I am fighting for a true cause, in which I have assurance of support not only from Bombay but from Calcutta and even from England."[25] This letter sheds light on the then prevailing position of the dispute.

On October, 16, 1903 Col. Ferris conveyed the decision of the Governor on the petition made by Rajopadhye. According to the decision the Government refused to interfer in the matter of Rajopadhye and asserted that the orders of the Darbar issued to Rajopadhye were within the competence of the Maharaja of Kolhapur and that there are no adequate grounds for the Government of Bombay to intervene into the matter.[26]

Col. Ferris conveyed the Governor's decision to Shahu immediately after this, in which he says, "the decision of the Bombay Government will not be interfered with even if Rajopadhye appeals to the Government of India or the Secretary of State and that in your jurisdiction, also there was not tyranny or palpable injustice such as calls for the interference of the Paramount Power". Col. Ferris further feels that in the view of this decision the controversy of Vedokta would soon cease to exist.[27]

Sir C.H.Hill congratulated Shahu from London for the decision of the Governor of Bombay. He says, "You have nothing to fear if you steadily pursue your course of right and Government are always anxious to support you".[28]

Shahu received full support of the British officers such as Ferris, C.H.Hill, Edgerley and Fraser in the Vedokta Controversy. Shahu expressed his special thanks to Col. Ferris for his co-operation as the Political Agent. While conveying his feelings to him Shahu writes, "If he had received such support from the beginning of his career the opposition would not have been so strong and audacious and the Brahmins would not have been so overbearing." He further informs that the Brahmin community is being treated more courteously in Kolhapur State than in Baroda, Dewas and other States.[29]

Rajopadhye appealed to Lord Curzon, the Viceroy and Governor General of India on January. 5, 1905, He requested the Viceroy to reconsider the decision given by the Governor of Bombay and to return his Imams and Vatans that Shahu had confiscated.[30] Later, he also sent a supplementary petition against the decision of the Governor of Bombay to the Viceroy on April 10, 1905.[31]

On the appeal by Rajopadhye the Government of India issued a notice that contained the final decision on his claims. It is very significant to note that the Government on India retained the same verdict of the Governor of Bombay in this case and declared that, "the Government of India concur in the view of the Government of Bombay that His Highness the Maharaja of Kolhapur was competent to pass the orders complained of and consider that no grounds have been shown for the intervention of the Government of India".[32]

This final decision of the Government of India was conveyed to Rajopadhye by the Political Agent on June 13, 1905 and it brought to an end the much chewed controversy of Vedokta, with its result in favour of Shahu and his Darbar.

Shahu Victorious in the End

Rajopadhye case was the last hope of the entire Brahmin Community in Maharashtra but since the decision of the Government of India was declared in favour of Shahu, final hope of the Brahmins died out. The Brahmin camp was seized with depression. They had no other place left for redressing their so called grievance and so, they decided to surrender and make peace. The first surrender was made by the Shankaracharya of Karveer, Brahmanalker Swami, their spiritual leader. He declared that, "the family of Chhatrapatis of Kolhapur belongs to the Kshatriya Varna and that there is no objection to the performance of Vedokta rites in their family". (July, 10, 1905)[33]

Shahu then took pity on him and returned the wealth of the Shankaracharya's Math.[34] Shankaracharya was followed by the entire Brahmin community in Kolhapur in surrendering themselves. In Dec,1905 they held a special public meeting in which they pronounced "H.H.Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur is a Kshatriya and that all religious rites in this royal family should be performed according to the Vedokta ritual as per their ancient family tradition".[35]

In this way, Shahu was successful in the social conflict that continued for six long years. It was a significant event not only in Shahu's life but in the social history of India. Its credit goes to Shahu's patience, pursuit of the truth as well as to the extraordinary support and cooperation extended to him by the British Government. If such support had not been extended by the British Government, it would not have been easy for Shahu to win the Victory. The British Government was equally happy to share the joy of Shahu, as they had humbled their perpetual enemy, at least for the time-being.

References and Footnotes

1. SCRR, p. 90
2. Ibid, p. 89
3. RSCP, Vol. III, Letter No. 67, 68, pp. 161-162
4. Kesari, 20, 22 October, 1901
5. RSC, p. 100
6. Ibid, p. 100
7. RSCP, Vol. III, Introduction, p. 27
8. Ibid, p. 28
9. Ibid, Letter No. 69, p. 163
10. Ibid, Letter No. 70, p. 164
11. Ibid, Letter No. 70, pp. 164-165
12. Ibid, Letter No. 6, p. 29
13. Ibid, Letter No. 72, pp. 171-178
14. Ibid, Letter No. 71, p. 168
15. Ibid, Letter No. 73, p. 179
16. Ibid, Letter No. 7, p. 30
17. Ibid, Letter No. 10, p. 34
18. Ibid, Letter No. 22, p. 61
19. Ibid, Letter No. 23, p. 62
20. Ibid, Letter No. 28, p. 78
21. Ibid, Letter No. 33, p. 83
22. Ibid, Letter No. 112, pp. 250-263
23. Ibid, Letter No. 114, pp. 271-277
24. Ibid, Letter No. 65, p. 158
25. Ibid, Letter No. 47, pp. 101-102
26. Ibid, Letter No. 50, p. 105
27. Ibid, Letter No. 51, p. 106
28. Ibid, Letter No. 52, p. 108
29. Ibid, Letter No. 55, p. 113
30. Ibid, Letter No. 64, 126, pp. 126, 293
31. Ibid, Letter No. 134, p. 311
32. Ibid, Letter No. 139, pp. 341, 342
33. Ibid, Letter No. 146, pp. 380-383
34. RSSG, p. 45
35. RSCP, Vol. III, Letter No. 147, pp. 384-385

Chapter V
Freedom Movement

The genesis of Freedom Movement in Kolhapur State could be traced back right upto the revolts of 1844 and 1857. In 1844, the Gadkaris of the forts of Bhudargad, Samangad etc. rose in arms against the British and their agent in Kolhapur, but failed in their endeavour to expel them. Again in 1857, when the signals of revolt were received at Kolhapur, the Sepoys of the 27th Native Battalion rebelled against their British officers and killed many of them. The young and spirited Chimasaheb, the brother of Chhatrapati Babasaheb, was to lead them. But for the co-operation and consent of the latter the revolt miserably failed. Kolhapur, however, was saved from the British annexation. The revolt of 1844 was local in its nature; whereas the revolt of 1857 had got a national base as it had been linked with the national rising against the British Paramount Power in India. However, both the revolts were the attempts of the people to free themselves from the clutches of alien power.

With the passage of time, the political situation in the country changed. In 1894, when Shahu Chhatrapati was invested with the power of administration of his State, both he and his subjects came to realize that the days of an armed resistance to the British had become a thing of past and it was utterly futile, nay suicidal, to think of any sort of rebellion against the mightest imperial power in the world, i.e. the British Empire. Shahu had come to conclusion that before he could dream of any political freedom of the Country, he should achieve freedom for his people from ignorance and poverty and also freedom from religious and social tyranny of the upper class of the society, i.e. the Brahmin community. So Shahu's freedom struggle was a struggle for freedom from the dominance of the Brahmins and not from that of the British. This historical fact should be borne in mind while evaluating his views and policy regarding the so-called National Freedom struggle within and without his state.

Groups in Kolhapur Politics: 1894 – 1905

Shahu's Struggle was for the social freedom based on the Principles of equality and social justice. He need not have to bother about the political rights of the masses. At the same time, the Brahmin community need not have to bother about the social rights of the masses as they had been fully enjoying them at the cost of the latter. Hence they are found agitating through constitutional means for political rights in the name of national freedom. Their political agenda included *Swarajya* (Self-Government), *Swadeshi* (Championing the cause of indigenous goods) *Bahishkar* (boycott on foreign goods) and *Rashtriya Shikshan* (National Education). So they were termed as 'Nationalists'. Some of them, mostly the

youths, who did not believe in the constitutional means, turned into 'Terrorists'. Both the Nationalists and Terrorists in Kolhapur State belonged to the same stock, the Brahmin community.

Besides these two Brahmin groups there arose on the social horizon of Kolhapur a third group. It was a group of young energetic and educated Phule-oriented non-Brahmins. Most of them were the followers of the Satyashodhak Samaj, committed to annihilate the Brahmin dominance in the caste ridden society. Naturally, they were considered as the antagonists of the Brahmin community. The division between the Brahmin and non-Brahmin groups was made evidently distinct in the days of Vedokta controversy.

The outbreak of the Vedokta controversy in 1899 evolved into a social movement, which had far-reaching effects on the social and political history of Maharashtra. In the Vedokta struggle, the Kolhapur Brahmins were totally defeated and they had to surrender to Shahu, accepting his claims to the Vedokta status as a Kshatriya – (1905). It should be noted that the British Political machinery, right from the Political Agent to the Viceroy of India, had sided with Shahu and upheld his claims to the Vedokta rites. The Kolhapur Brahmins, though they had made retreat outwardly, were hurt at heart and were seeking an opportunity to bring Shahu into difficulty. So they began to help the terrorists against the British Government especially in the Kolhapur State.

A Haven of Terrorists

One Hanumantrao Kulkarni Murkibhavikar, a social worker, had founded 'Shivaji Club'in 1893. In the beginning, the many non-Brahmin youths along with the Brahmins, were associated with the Club. Some of them were the relatives of the Royal Family and Kolhapur Sardars. Shahu had in his mind the image of this club as an association devoted to the worship of his great ancestor Shivaji the Great and the Country. It was because of this conviction that the Kolhapur Darbar had in the beginning appreciated the work of the Club and helped it by providing the horses and traditional weapons like Dandpattas. Even the British Government did not have any objections to its cultural and social activities.[1]

However, this state of things did not last for a long. Soon the founder members, mostly the Brahmin youths, inspired by the teaching of Lokmanya Tilak, began to collect arms and ammunition for carrying on anti-British activities in Kolhapur State for which some of them were tried in the Court of Law and subsequently sentenced.[2] Naturally Shahu became cautious about the Club and stopped his help to it. However, anti-British activities of the members of the Club did not stop. They continued their fund raising and arms collecting work as before. For the sake of funds, they even committed thefts in Kolhapur city, when the people were forced to leave their houses during the epidemic of Plague. At the same time, when Shahu was facing Wray's Poison Case, the Shivaji Club members tried to take undue advantage of his difficulties by spoiling his relations with the British

Government. Naturally, Shahu had to take stern action, against them, and issue an order asking the Darbar Servants and their relatives not to have any kind of relations with the Club.[3] Consequently, almost all the non-Brahmin members discontinued their association with the Club as a result of which it became exclusively a Brahmin Terrorist organization. (1900)

The Vedokta controversy, the discomfiture of the Brahmin community in it, Shahu's stern measures against the activities of the Shivaji Club, appointments of non-Brahmin persons to the higher administrative posts in the State, anti-Shahu compaign sponsored by the Brahmin newspapers, especially the Kesari from Pune, oppressive policy of Lord Curzon, especially against the Revolutionaries in the Country, and rise of Tilak as an extremist leader of the Indian National Cougress -- all these factors contributed to the rise of the Terrorist activities in the Kolhapur State.

It should be noted that Tilak never openly espoused the cause of the Terrorists or the Revolutionary groups but he had secret links with them and at times helped them with money and material. Hence, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, one of the great Revolutionaries of India, has aptly remarked: Lokmanya was the fist of the sword and the revolutionaries were the blade of the sword. According to Tilak, it was the oppressive policies of the British Government that was the root-cause of the political and social unrest and rise of revolutionary groups in India.[4]

It has been already discussed elsewhere in this work Tilak had joined hands with the Kolhapur Brahmins in the Vedokta Controversy. Later he secretly sympathised with their terrorist activities and openly supported their political agitations against Shahu and the British Government. Thus the anti-Shahu and anti-British activities in Kolhapur State, though basically political in nature, had got religious and social shades. And when the Tai Maharaj Case came to the forefront, it added fuel to the fire.

Tai Maharaj Case

Vasudeo Haribhau Pandit alias Baba Maharaj was the descendant of Sidheswar Maharaj, a spiritual Guru of Shivaji II of Kolhapur. He was the first class Sardar of Kolhapur State, having Inams of so many villages in and out of Kolhapur State. He was a close friend of Tilak. During his stay in Pune, he died in August 1897. It was rumored then that he had committed suicide out of fear of his being implicated in the case of murder of Plague Commissioner Mr. Rand. According to the will of Baba Maharaj, Tilak was one of the trustees of his estate. As a trustee and close friend of the deceased, Tilak felt that it was his legal and moral duty to select a suitable heir to the estate of Baba Maharaj. So he and his colleagues selected a boy from Aurangabad, named Jagannath, who was willingly adopted by Sakawarbai alias Tai Maharaj, widow of Baba Maharaj (June 1901). However, for such adoption the sanction of Kolhapur Darbar was necessary. Tilak had taken it for granted that the Darbar would easily give it and would not prevent the adoption. However, the

Darbar refused to grant. Meanwhile, Tai Maharaj had come to Kolhapur and changed her mind. She disowned the adopted son, saying that she had been misled by the trustees. She moved one step further and adopted another son of her choice (Bala Maharaj) for which Kolhapur Darbar readily granted sanction. (July 1901) Even the British Government supported her against Tilak. It was obvious that it was because of Shahu's support, she could disown Jagannath Maharaj and dared challenge Tilak. Later both the parties rushed to the Court of Law and the case, popularly known in history as the Tai Maharaj Case, dragged on for years together. Eventually, Tilak approached the Privy Council in England, which upheld the claims of Tilak and Jagannath Maharaj. It was because of the Tai Maharaj Case, that both Shahu and Tilak stood deadly against each other as staunch rivals. It is also due to this Case, that the deeply wounded Tilak further deliberately sided with the Kolhapur Brahmins in the Vedokta Controversy. This is well – substantiated by a statement made by Lord Nothcote, the then Governor of Bombay, in his letter to the Secretary of State for India on July 12, 1902. He writes that when Tilak visited Kolhapur, he intervened in the Vedokta Controversy and instigated the Kolhapur Brahmins who exacerbated the struggle. He further says that on account of Tilak's instigations, the issue of Vedokta became a matter of prestige to both, the Brahmins and the Marathas. [5]

The Tai Maharaj Episode reveals, it seems, that Shahu had shown a disproportionate interest in a relatively less significant issue which in turn wasted time, money and energy of both the great men like Shahu and Tilak.

The Kolhapur Terrorists, Nationalists and Tilak

There were eighteen Deccan Native States in India. Most of them were Brahmin States such as Sangli, Miraj, Jamkhindi, Aundh, Bhor etc. But nowhere in those States had, the Terrorists formed their organizations or started their activities as they did in the Kolhapur State. In 1900, Shahu had banned the Shivaji Club activities. But its members continued their secret activities under one or the other banner. In 1903 one of its members Damu Joshi founded the Belapur Swami Samaj (Club) in Kolhapur, outwardly for propagation of spiritual teachings but secretly for carrying on the work of the erstwhile Shivaji Club. For the sake of funds, he along with his colleagues, committed dacoities, for which they were arrested and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment (1906). At that time, the Kolhapur Darbar had made inquiries about some Brahmin activists who were found to be the followers of Tilak.

Tilak once again visited Kolhapur in March 1906. In a public address he strongly opposed the British government policy, which maintained that the interests of the subjects in British India and Native States were quite different. He forcefully advocated that the people should have a share in the absolute power of the ruler whether it was native or foreign. He further laid stress on the point that the people, both in British India and Native States, should co-operate with each other in organizing agitations against the rulers. While openly pleading for a Representative

Assembly in the Kolhapur State, Tilak said, "There should be co-operation among agitators in British India and Native States, and each would derive material strength from the success of the other. The task of inducing a foreign Government like that of Britain to cede rights to a subject race alien in blood and religion is really very stupendous. But as the Native rulers are of the same stock and religious belief it is comparatively easy to prevail upon them. There is no ground to fear that the British Government would be displeased with the Maharaja if he invests his rayats with some powers."[6]

He continued that, to call a Representative Assembly in Kolhapur was not an act of disloyalty at all, but it was a contest with the ruler to circumscribe his powers. The British Government was able, in the name of the rulers of the States, to do in their territory such things as they could not at all do in their own. In such cases the rulers would be justified if they represented to the British Government that they could not do anything unless it was approved by the Assembly of the people. In this way, the Institution of Representative Assembly would be an accession of strength.[7]

Tilak further urged the people to secure the rights of self-government not by begging but by force from the rulers and appealed especially the leaders of Kolhapur people to carry on their agitation firmly and co-operate with the agitators in British Indian territory.[8]

No doubt, this inflammatory speech of Tilak had its desired effect on the Kolhapur Brahmins especially the Nationalists. Soon their leaders like Prof. Vijapurkar, Adv. Alatekar, Adv. Abhyankar, Dr. Parandekar, Adv. Rashingkar came together and decided to form a Representative Assemble. On October 2, 1906, they met under the presidentship of Dr. Ruikar and established the said Assembly.[9]

It was obvious that the Representative Assembly was predominantly a Brahmin organization. The non-Brahmins had kept themselves away from it and as an immediate reaction they had expressed their opposition to it. In this context, Shahu wrote to Sir S.W. Edgerley, the Chief Secretary to the Bombay Government, that the backward classes in his State had shown enough courage to fearlessly oppose the 'mischievous attempts of the Brahmins to spread sedition'.[10] To Shahu the formation of Representative Assembly seemed to be a part of Brahmin agitation which had targeted Kolhapur and Kagal and not any of his feudatories like Vishalgad and Ichalkaraji. His views regarding the Representative Assembly have been amply reflected in his letter to Mr. Fulton of the Political Department of Bombay. He writes, "I should not have minded if it was an honest movement fairly representing the people at large but the very fact that the leaders have confined their work to Kagal Senior and Kolhapur and not a single one of the other feudatories or S.M.C. Chiefs is included is enough to show their real object. Evidently they do not like our efforts to bring forward the Backward Classes and that is why they do not like us and naturally they hate us."[11]

As a matter of fact we find Shahu issuing an order to his government officials on October 12, 1906 that they should not take any cognizance of the correspondance received from the 'Loksabha' or 'Pratinidhi Sabha' i.e. the Representative Assembly and that they should not have any direct or indirect contact with it. Shahu had mentioned that long ago in 1892 some people had attempted, to form such as organization called 'Rayat Agency' but the attempt had failed. Similarly, this Pratinidhi Sabha also met the same fate and never met again. [12]

Incidently, it may be mentioned that the Nationalists had invited Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a Veteran Moderate leader of India, to preside over the session of the Representative Assembly. Gokhale who, born and educated in Kolhapur State, was in a way 'a Kolhapur Man'. But he did not approve of the intention and methods of the Kolhapur Brahmins. Hence, he declined their invitation and never came to Kolhapur till the end of his life. Prof. A.B. Latthe gives an anecdote in his biography of Shahu. He writes, "Mr. Sabnis, the Diwan happening to meet him (Gokhale) in a train casually asked him when he was expected to revisit Kolhapur. "The world" said Mr. Gokhale, 'is wide enough for me outside the Kolhapur State'. And he bore this fact scrupulously in mind during the rest of his life."

Shahu's Character Assasination

Shahu had come under various types of attacks launched from the quarter of the Kolhapur Brahmins. The worst type of attack was his character assassination. They sent anonymous letters to the Government of Bombay and even to Lady Minto, the wife of the Viceroy Lord Minto, making sinister allegations regarding Shahu's extra-marital relations with the certain three ladies in Kolhapur. The letter sent to Lady Minto was under the signatures of Brahmin women of Kolhapur. [13] When the Government of Bombay took the cognizance of such letters, Shahu promptly wrote a letter to Col. Ferris, the Political Agent of Kolhapur, stating that it was a planned conspiracy of his enemies and that he had been prepared to face a thorough investigation by the British Government and private or public enquiries with the guardians of the said ladies. He further informed the Government that he would not mind even if his known enemies like Bijapurkar, Tilak, Rashingkar were allowed to help the inquiry. He was even ready to go away from the capital during period of inquiry if needed. In the end he again appelaled to the British authority to look into the charge of debauchery not in this episode alone but in any episode they chose from his childhood to the present time. [14]

The British Political Agent Col. Ferris made thorough inquiry of the episode and gave a clean chit to Shahu. He reported to the Government of Bombay, "I am sure, as it is possible to be, that his highness leads a clean life. I believe he had mistress up to last year, but she died, he had never been a promiscuous fornicator" [15]

Thus Shahu won the second battle against the Kolhapur Brahmins both the Terrorists and perhaps the Nationalists who had attempted at his character

assassination. No doubt, it was a crucial test in his life, but he boldly faced it and passed through it successfully only because truth was on his side, making his stand morally sound. Some credit of his victory must be given to the impartial role played by the British Government and their representative in Kolhapur viz. Col. Ferris, who, on inquiry, sent his report to the Bombay Government, favorable to Shahu. Shahu was greatly pleased with him. Hence we find him requesting the Governor of Bombay to give extension to his term in Kolhapur. In his letter to the Sir Claude Hill, the member of the Political Department Shahu writes 'He will be of great use to us in carrying out the Imperial Service Troop Scheme and he is also useful in carrying out the Government Policy in regard to feudatories and he will also deal with intrigues of the Brahmins in the State'. [16]

The Bombay Government took the cognizance of Shahu's request and granted extention to the term of Col. Ferris till the marriage of Princess Radhabai alias Akkasaheb Maharaj in March 1908. [17]

Swadeshi Movement and Kolhapur State

In the beginning of 20th Century the Swadeshi Movement had been spread all over India. Tilak was one of its leaders. His followers in the Bombay Presidency were main activists of the Movement. The Swadeshi movement was gaining ground among the Kolhapur Brahmins and the students of Rajaram College, who mostly came from the Brahmin Community. Prof. Vijapurkar was the principal spokesman of the Movement. Under the influence of his Swadeshi philosophy, the students of Rajaram College demanded Deshi answer books at the time of examination and when they were refused, they boycotted the examination and left the examination hall. The Kolhapur Darbar took a serious note of this incident and out rightly dismissed Prof. Vijapurkar, compensating his six month Salary – [September, 1905] On March 25, 1906 an association called 'Swadesh Mandal' was established in Kolhapur. Its avowed object was "to bring into use as much as practicable Indian manufactured articles to the exclusion of foreign ones and thus help rise of the Indian Nation, Deval, Vijapurkar, Altekar, Sontakke, Datar, Joshi, Digawadekar, Abhyankar and Phadke were its 'Principal' members. They were all Nationalist Brahmins and mostly the pleaders of Kolhapur. The Police report said that they occasionally met together in a shop called 'Swadeshi' near the Old Palace 'to transact business'. [18]

Soon, Prof. Vijapurkar started, a monthly journal titled 'Vishwavritta' in April 1906. Rastriya Shikshan i.e. National Education was one of the allied objectives of the Swadeshi Movement. Accordingly, Vijapurkar started a National School -Nootan Samartha Vidyalaya- in Kolhapur (June 1906). In his work he had actively been helped by Lokmanya Tilak, C.V. Vaidya and Daji Abaji Khare from Poona. [19] It is interesting to see what type of Principles were adopted while conducting the so called National school of Prof. Bijapurkar. The faith in the *Chaturvaarnya* (Division of Society on the basis of *Varnas*) and the *Punarjanma*

(Rebirth), the basic principle of the *Sanatan* (orthodox) Hindu Dharma, was the basis of his educational Philosophy) consequently, both the teachers and taught were obliged to practice the age old disgraceful untouchability. Such a founder of the National school was hailed by the Nationalists as Modern Ramdas.

In the month of June 1906, some Brahmin youths the Terrorists committed several thefts and robberies in Kolhapur. It was found that they had connections with the leaders of Swadeshi Movement. All these thefts and robberies were 'on the same lines' as the thefts and robberies in Poona. [20] Moreover, some of these Terrorists seemed to be in contact with Tilak at Poona. In his letter, dated August 2, 1906 Shahu writes to Sir Edgerley of the Political department of Bombay, "The Principal culprits are all Bs (i.e. Brahmins) and are connected with the Tilak Party at Poona. We are getting their photo in which Tilak is sitting in the center and his captains on both sides. Three of the offenders in the theft are there" [21]

It should be noted here that though what Shahu had noted in his correspondence was true, the Terrorists were not seasoned thieves or robbers. No doubt, they might have committed thefts, but those were for the sake of raising the funds for their so called activities of national freedom and not for personal gains. But whatever might be the fact, Shahu was greatly worried about their activities. In one of his letters to the Political Department Bombay, he writes, "I am placed in great anxiety on account of the newly established national school and the existence here of the Shivaji cult, in the name of which some dacoities are being committed and young men rendered seditious and disloyal'. [22]

Shahu was convinced that all these activities of the Kolhapur Brahmins were aimed at paralysing his administration in every possible way. Even they had tried to spread sedition among his Rayats. On October 5, 1906 he writes to the Governor of Bombay, "Upto this time they tried several means, but now they have enlarged the field of action. They have now by holding out false hopes to my Rayat, tried to gain them over and have tried to form themselves into a body something like National Congress" [23]

In his struggle against the Kolhapur Brahmins movement, the British Government stood firmly on Shahu's side and supported all his actions. His personal friends like Sir Edgerley used to sympathize with him and advise him in these words: "So long as you act methodically and on published known policy and avoid any thing arbitrary or vindictive you can shape your State as you would have it" [24]

An annual fair used to be held at a place called Narsoba's Wadi. The Brahmin leaders like Vijapurkar and Rashingkar from Kolhapur and Gangadharrao Deshpande from Belgaum took the advantage of this religious assemblage for delivering inflammatory speeches against Shahu and the British. The Kolhapur officers tried to prevent them with no avail. They questioned their legal authority to do so. In his letter to Sir Edgerley, Shahu writes that Bhikshukas i.e. beggar class of Brahmins are getting insolent and defy the government authorities in the State. He

further states that Gangadhar Deshpande while welcoming and applauding Tilak at Belgaum, likened him to Shivaji the Great and called him Rajadhiraj Chhatrapati Tilak Maharaj ![25] As result of these agitational events Shahu decided to take stern measures such as stopping of any newspaper and removal of any disloyal person who disputed his authority.[26]

About this time, Kolhapur Darbar had prepared a detailed confidential report on the Swadeshi movement in the Kolhapur State in which it was noted that the movement had no innate strength and that there was not much chance of its making any great headway as the agitators had been engaged in the work of opposing the Darbar. The report further said that the masses, uneducated and poor, had few wants which were easily supplied by indigenous articles and that they did not understand what the movement was nor did they care to know why it should be supported. Thus the movement was confined to well to do and educated people only.[27]

It should be noted here that Shahu was a champion of Swadeshi at heart. He used the Swadeshi paper and many other things such as cloth and matchboxes. Later, he once visited a Swadeshi shop conducted by the Congress leaders like Gangadhar Deshpande and others and purchased many swadeshi articles and cloth. This he did out of his spontaneous and patriotic feelings. However, Swadeshi being one of the political devices to humble the British government, he could not openly support it.[28]

Increasing Activities of Terrorists

The Swadeshi Movement was political in nature and its leaders were from the upper educated Brahmin class. Their activities were confined to the demand for a Representative Assembly. But as we have seen that the demand was relegated to background and by 1907 the Political agitations assumed a new form of sedition and terrorism. It included violent activities like those of thefts, robberies, dacoits' attacks and conspiracies of murder. The number of such violent activities was so large that one could hardly find any other Native State at that time in which such serious condition prevailed.

The dangerous situation created by the Brahmin agitators out of whom many had turned into the Terrorists naturally worried Shahu who then decided to control their activities. Hence, On June 11, 1907 he issued a notification that "thence forward no meeting, public or private, having for its objects, solely or in part, directly or indirectly, the consideration of political questions connected with the British Government or the Darbar, should be held in the State without the express permission of the District Magistrate" The District Magistate would have full discretionary powers to prevent such a meeting altogether or allow it to be held under such conditions as it might deem expedient to impose.[29]

The notification further observed that certain irresponsible and mischievous agitators had been systematically misrepresenting the acts of the British

Government and the Kolhapur Darbar, thereby spreading discontent among the ignorant masses that formed the bulk of His Highness' subjects and sowing the seeds of sedition. Shahu considered such persons as really the enemies of country.[30]

Lokmanya Tilak in his strongly worded editorial article in the Kesari, dated June 18, 1907, hit back at Shahu's order, saying that although the British Government had issued such orders in the Punjab and Bengal, it was unbecoming on the part of descendant of Shivaji to outdo the British. According to Tilak, Shahu's order was unwarranted and unjustified as no such situation had arisen in his State. Time would decide whether Shahu was an enemy of the agitators or they were the enemies of Shahu. Tilak concluded, "That the Maharaja of Kolhapur is one of our good rulers is a fact. If, however, the foetus falls athwart, there is no other way but to cut it off. Necessity knows no law; one must get over the difficulty."[31]

Such were the attacks from the Brahmin Press in Maharashtra. But in spite those attacks Shahu stuck to his guns and took stern measures to suppress the activities of the Brahmin Terrorists as well as Nationalist agitators. Bhaskarrao Jadhav who was the District Magistrate refused the permission to the leaders of the Representative Assembly to hold its session in the State-(October 1907). When Tilak learned this, he instigated the leaders of the Assembly to continue their struggle for Swarajya in the State and hold their conferences or meeting at the nearby places on the border of Kolhapur State.[32]

On November 26, 1907 Shahu wrote a letter to Sir George Clarke, the Governor of Bombay, placing before him the unparalleled situation in Kolhapur State, he says, "Kolhapur has now become the headquarter of Poona Cult next to Poona. This is quite evident from the simple facts that we have traced three clubs which were collecting arms and ammunitions by ill means and by committing dacoities. They are all members of the so – called Shivaji cult and followers of Tilak ..... There sole object is to excite the people against me. Your Excellency will find that there is hardly a Native State in the whole of India where that is so".[33]

To the Terrorists in Kolhapur Col. Ferris was their No. 1 enemy who was the main hurdle in their activities. The main activists of the terrorist group of Kolhapur were Ganpatrao Modak and A.D. Kulkarni. In their meetings, they had decided that as Col. Ferris was at the bottom of all the troubles in Kolhapur,he should not be allowed to leave India alive. Their colleague Damu Joshi accepted the challenge, saying that he would take his life. Soon, in February 1908 Damu left for Poona and met one G.P. Bapat, a bomb – expert and requested him to make a bomb for him. He wanted to throw it at the pendal in the marriage ceremony of the Kolhapur Princess.[34]

The marriage ceremony took place on March 21, 1908 in specially erected Pandal in the Old Palace. Shahu and Col. Ferris welcomed the European guests: Sir George Clarke, the Governor of Bombay, Miss Clarke, his daughter, Sir George J.S. Warender, C – in – C of the Royal Navy, Mr. And Mrs. Muir

Mackenzie, General Sir Archibald Hunter, Commander of Southern Army and many others including British officers and Princes and feudatories of the Native States.[35] Pundits from Banaras were invited to perform the marriage ceremony with Vedic rites. But the Kolhapur Brahmins, who once had denied the Vedokta rights to Shahu, had become restive. They even tried to frighten away the Banaras Pundits to prevent the Vedokta ceremony from being performed when they did not succeed in their mischievous doings; they tried to excommunicate the Pundits.[36]

The bomb, prepared by Bapat, did reach Kolhapur, but it was not in time. Shahu and his esteemed guests were fortunate enough to escape death at the hands of the Kolhapur Terrorists. One can hardly imagine what havoc would have been caused, had the bomb reached Kolhapur in time.[37]

During his visit to Kolhapur the Governor Sir George Clarke had a frank discussion with Shahu on many current problems, including terrorism and seditious activities in India. Shahu expressed his dissatisfaction with the mild measures adopted by the British Government to suppress the lawlessness created by the political agitators and the terrorists.[38]

Damu Joshi and his colleague Modak did not take the failure of their attempt of throwing bomb lying down. They wanted to Kill Col. Ferris anyhow. So Damu went to Belgaum and procured two revolvers from Gangadhar Deshpande. On April 16, 1908 Col. Ferris upon the completion of his tenure, left Kolhapur. While he was traveling by train, Damu fired at him, but the revolver did not go off. Col. Ferris was saved by sheer good luck for the second time.[39]

Increased terrorist activities in Kolhapur had caused great anxiety to Shahu. Hence, on July 16, 1908, he wrote to Major Wodehouse, the newly appointed Political Agent, requesting him to arrange to procure a company of British soldiers for Kolhapur, in order to scare away the bomb agitators. Shahu had hoped to procure the company at the expense of the British Government.[40]

The situation in the Kolhapur State was worsening day by day. Even the life of Shahu was in danger as he was threatened with death by the Kolhapur Terrorists. In one of anonymous letters, the Terrorists had said that he would be the victim of bomb explosion within a month as he had insulted Tilak's Jagadguru. They also challenged him to save his life with the help of British Government.[41]

On July 6, 1908, Shahu was to come to Kolhapur by train. The Terrorists had concealed a bomb on the road which led to the New Palace from the Railway Station. On his arrival Shahu was to go by that road. But he came by the next train thereby escaping the danger of bomb. The concealed bomb exploded under the foot of a tanga pony, damaging its leg. Shahu was saved merely by chance.[42]

Shahu's Measures against the Terrorists

In the Vedokta Controversy, Prof. Vijapurkar had led the Kolhapur Brahmins against Shahu. He had been publishing two journals, namely '*Samartha*' and '*Vishwavritta*' from Kolhapur and propagating the principles of *Swarajya,*

Swadeshi and *Rashriya Shikshan.* In the March issue of *Vishwavritta*, he had published an article 'powerfulness of the Vedic prayers' by a Vedic Scholoar, Pandit Satavalekar, in which the author had criticized Shahu and Maharaja Sayajirao Gaikwad in a sarcastic and defamatory language. The Kolhapur Police took a serious note of the article and arrested Vijapurkar and his colleagues in August 1908. The Police had also framed other cases against the terrorists. In all these cases both the accused and judges were Brahmins. Hence the judges, namely Pandit and Ghokhale declined to take up their cases on the ground that they were closely related to Vijapurkar and other Brahmins accused. Shahu had no other way but to request the British Government to lend the services of a Sessions Judge and C.A. Kincaid was sent to Kolhapur accordingly.

In Jan. 1909, Kincaid delivered a judgment and convicted Vijapurkar and his colleagues. Vijapurkar, on account of his age and social status, was sentenced to three years simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 1000/-. In default of payment six months simple imprisonment. His colleagues were also punished with the sentences of rigorous imprisonment of various periods. Kincaid also tried other cases against the terrorists including Shenolikar, Bapat, Ambapkar, Gokhale, Padhye, Damu Joshi and others. Almost all the terrorists, except Damu, were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment of from one year to seven years. Damu somehow got off under the benefit of, definition of term 'Attempt'. Later, in 1910, Shahu, in an appeal by the Police against the acquittal of Damu, sentenced him to seven years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 500/-.[43]

On September 6, 1908, Major Wodhouse imformed R.V. Sabnis, the Diwan of Kolhapur that the British Police had arrested three terrorists G.P. Bapat, R.B. Gadre and N.J. Padhye.[44] It is already noted that it was Bapat who had made bomb for Damu Joshi to be thrown at the pandal of Akkasaheb Maharaj Marriage.

On September 7, 1908. Shahu had written a long letter to Mr. Muir Mackenzie of the Political Department of Bombay, giving detailed account of the investigation by the Kolhapur Police about the bomb – making conspiracy and the terrorists at their bottom. The Police report mentioned the names of K.D. Kulkarni, Ganoo Modak and Khadilkar of the Kesari and categorically stated that K.D. Kulkarni, who had gone to Japan, was the deepest plotter of the conspiracy. Shahu writes further that he has no slightest objection, if the British Government wishes to take the case and investigate it.[45]

Next day Shahu had also informed about the investigation done by his police pertaining to the terrorist activities in Kolhapur and Belgaum and proudly expressed his feelings regarding the excellent work done by them in the following words: "I think my Police have worked well and they are quite proud of it. Their only wish is that their services may be appreciated if it is a success by Government. They feel proud because they have traced threads all over the Presidency and given clue to the Government Police. This is due to the encouragement given by Major

Woodhouse and Government. If Major Woodhouse is kept in charge of the inquiry, my Police will work willingly as he has gained their confidence." [46] Shahu was greatly pleased with his Police officers who were rewarded for their excellent services. The chief Police officer Mr. Fernandes was honoured and presented with sword. [47]

Shahu, with the help of his Police, had completed the inquiry regarding the Bomb conspiracy and had sent detailed report to the Government of Bombay. However, he was expecting further response from the British Government. For that purpose he had sent his Police officer Mr. Fernandes to Mr. Morrison of the Political Department of Bombay. On October 6, 1908 Shahu wrote a letter to him, suggesting four courses of action to be adopted by the Government of Bombay. They were:

"1) After the close of our inquiry the Durbar should only give the clues they have to the British Police.
2) That the clues found by our Police should be worked up by them even in government jurisdiction of course with the assistance which they may require from Government Police.
3) The British Police should work up the clues with the assistance of our police.
4) Our Police should work up the clues with some Judge or Collector as but servants." [48]

Shahu's sincere and relentless efforts and stern measure in stamping out the terrorism from his State were very well appreciated by the highest British authorities such as the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy of India. [49] Soon On January 1, 1901, the King Emperor of India bestowed upon him an honour of raising of his personal salute to 21 guns. [50] while congratulating him, his Guru and the then Resident of Mysore Sir S.M. Fraser has aptly commented upon the achievement of Shahu as a ruler: "Kolhapur has reached under your rule a position of fame unequalled in its history, which will make your reign memorable" [51]

Shahu was firm and tactful in dealing with the activities of the terrorists in his State. Sir George Clarke in his personal letter, dated March 9, 1909 had expressed satisfaction for the measures, taken by Shahu against the terrorists, which reveals conspiracy for making and using bombs. He also requested Shahu to take all precautions for personal safety as his "your life is of inestimable importance to your State and to the Southern Maratha Country, where your influence for good is so great". Shahu had requested the Governor to send Mr. Wallinger, a British Government officer, to Kolhapur, to work out the joint endeavour of the Police forces of both the Kolhapur State and the Bombay Government. Upon this the Governor directed Mr. Wallinger to proceed to Kolhapur in order to assist Shahu's officers. The Governor writes, "It is most necessary that we should secure cordial co-operations between our police forces in order that all clues may be followed up." [52]

Mr. Wallinger came to Kolhapur as an officer on special duty. His mission was to investigate and ascertain whether the various conspiracies in

Kolhapur discovered by Shahu's Police had any ramifications extending into British India and other Native States. On July 30, 1909, Major Wodehouse requested Shahu to give Mr. Wallinger all necessary facilities. [53] In the following August, Major Wodehouse arranged a conference between Mr. Wallinger and the representatives of the Kolhapur State to settle the lines to be adopted in working up the cases against the terrorists. [54]

It was a known fact then that Shahu's feudatories such as the Ichalkaranjikar and the Vishalgadkar had sympathies with the followers of Tilak. In his private letter to Sir Muir Mackenzie Shahu candidly described the nature of the disloyal behaviour of these Brahmin Chiefs, stating that the seditious literature, photos, medals and several other articles came from Miraj, Jamkhandi and Ichalkaranji and were publically sold in the fairs of this State. Shahu thought that so long as their hounour and purse were not touched by the British Government, they would not care. They must be pinched so that the disloyal Chiefs might see that it were not paid to be disloyal. Shahu further specifically proposes that the additional powers, which the Chiefs of Vishalgad and Ichalkaranji, were recently allowed to exercise for their lifetime only might be forthwith withheld from them. [55]

It is interesting to note that the British Government took the cognizance of Shahu's suggestions and allowed him to withdraw the additional powers of Chiefs of Vishalgad and Ichalkaranji which were conferred upon them under the notification of 1903. This he did in early 1910. [56]

On December, 9, 1909, an important event took place in Bombay Presidency. The Collector of Nasik, Mr. Jackson, was shot dead in the Vijayanand Theatre, Nasik, by Anant Kanhere with the help of his two colleagues Karve and Deshpande. Mr. Jackson was a friend of Shahu and had been the Political Agent in Kolhapur for some time. Shahu was greatly grieved and held a public condolence meeting which was attended by a few Maratha and Jain students, but none of the Brahmins turned up. [57] In his condolence letter to Mrs. Jackson Shahu expressed deep grief and gratefully appreciated the services of Mr. Jackson, in these words : " If there was a man in India who deserved well from the Indians, it was he." [58] Later, in his letter to Sir. Muir Mackenzie ,Shahu had proposed to give as a token of sympathy a present of Rs. 5,000/- to Rs. 7,000/- to Mrs. Jackson. At the end of the letter Shahu had expressed his wish that his letters should not reach "the hands of natives. Otherwise, he would have to share 'the fate of poor Mr. Jackson.' [59]

Shahu had very friendly relations with Mr. Jackson ever since 1900, when he was appointed as the Political Agent in place of Col. Wray. He was an orientalist; but as part of oppressive machine of British Imperialism he had to adopt stern measures while dealing with the revolutionaries. It was he who was responsible for deporting Babarao Savarkar, the Nasik revolutionary, to the Andamans. Almost all Indian Statesmen condemned the killing of Mr. Jackson, though some of them might have done it outwardly. It might be more true with Shahu also. It was his

bounden duty to be loyal to the British Empire and express his loyal feelings as and when an occasion demanded. He had cultivated very cordial relations with the British bureaucrats including Governors and the Political Agents. Shahu's gesture in the context of Jackson episode should be viewed from this point of view.

The difference between Revolutionary and Terrorist

Shahu had made subtle difference between the Terrorists and the Revolutionary Patriots. When in 1908, Aurobindo Ghose, an icon of Bengali Youths and a great revolutionary, was arrested by the British Government, and his sister Sarojinidevi made a general appeal to her countrymen to contribute to the defense fund of Aurobindo, Shahu had secretly sent a donation of Rs. 5000/- through his friend Khaserao Jadhav in Baroda. He was also said to have sent secret monetary help even to Lokmanya Tilak.[60]

In the eyes of Imperialist British Government the revolutionaries like Savarkar, Aurobindo, Khudiram Bose, Bhagat Sing were all terrorists. But these terrorists were hailed by the contemporary Indians and later historians as revolutionary patriots and that was a correct terminology. Because these so-called terrorists were motivated to practice terrorism out of sheer love for their Country and they were prepared to die for their highly exalted aim of achieving freedom of their Nation. For that purpose, they wanted to terrorize the oppressive Government machinery. Not only that, they had a dream of free and great Indian Nation. They were also determined to effect radical political and social changes in the Indian Society. And hence they were called 'Revolutionaries.'

But such a terminology could not be applied to the terrorists in the Kolhapur State. Because their activities were not solely motivated by love for their Country. There certainly had dogmatic religious feelings and socio-cultural ego of the Varnashrama Dharma at the bottom of all their activities. In the Vedokta Controversy, they had declared Shahu as a Shudra, a low-born and though humbled by him in later days, they had not accepted his Kshatriyahood by heart. They were still smarting under their defeat. They were seeking an opportunity to bring Shahu to distress, thereby making it impossible for him to rule his State and if possible to create such circumstances which would compel him to abdicate the throne. Hence their terrorist activities were directed not only against the British Government but Shahu also. To them Shahu, like the British, was their No.1 enemy. We find them attempting at his life more than once. Thus there was personal antagonism along with their religious fanaticism in their terrorist activities.

Such type of terrorists could hardly be termed as revolutionaries. The patriots like V.D. Savarkar, Aurobindo, Khudiram Bose, Bhagat Sing were revolutionaries in true sense of the term. The terrorists like Damu Joshi and Ganoo Modak could never stand in comparison with them.

Home Rule Movement

It is already seen how Tilak ridiculed the claims of the non-Brahmins to their rights of entering the Legislative Councils. In fact his concept of Home Rule (*Swarajya*) was parochial in nature and limited to the chosen few. He thought that these was nothing wrong or undemocratic in entrusting the legislative and executive functions of the state to the learned few i.e. the Brahmins. This would have definitely created the Brahmin autocracy. That was why Shahu was opposed to the Home Rule Movement of Tilak. [61]

While explaining the concept of Home Rule, Tilak says, "Swarajya means the right to look after our domestic affairs... That is our right.... In fact the word Home Rule is perhaps new, but its concept is an old one. Since the ancient times we have been practicing it. The principle of election is new, but the Village administration was in the hands of the hereditary servants. Manusmruti is our code of law. King did not prepare Manusmruti.Great men, saints and leaders helped him in legislative work. The king had to rule with the help of the learned Brahmins. It is the verdict of our law i.e. Manusmruti." [62]

While addressing a large gathering in Poona in March 1920, he urged to start various vocational training schools like carpentry etc. on the modern lines and develop the hereditary vocations in the society. Emphasing this point he said, "If somebody from the untouchable classes comes to me and says that he wants to do his matriculations, I would say enough of your primary education, now learn the art of tanning. Similarly ask (the sons of) the potter to learn the art of moulding. (For my plain speaking) Please, don't get angry. [In short] Grow your occupations." [63]

Against this background of Tilak's reactionary social philosophy, the views of Shahu regarding Home Rule should be evaluated. In one of his notes presented at the Conference of Princes held in November 1917, Shahu elucidated how and why India was not ready for Home Rule administration.

"If, however, I am asked to give my opinion as an outsider, so far as I may, on so important a question as Home Rule, I have no hesitation in saying that India is not yet ready for that sort of administration. The masses are steeped in ignorance and superstition. They are under the thumb of the priestly classes. The gulf between them is wide and it seems as though it were impossible to bridge it. The rigid caste system and caste autonomy are an insuperable barrier and so long as this is not broken, there can be no harmonious working. The so-called representatives of the people would be representing only a very small minority of the educated classes who are hardly in touch with the masses. Their respective occupations and pursuits are widely different and not infrequently their interests clash. If reforms on the lines of Home rule are introduced, all power may go into the hands of those from whose selfish predominance the masses have suffered for ages. It is no wonder, therefore, that the bulk of the people, at any rate such of them as have enough education to understand the significance of the impending changes,

should be alarmed at the contemplated transfer of power and responsibility to an oligarchy of a handful of agitators. The priestly classes have hitherto trodden the masses under their feet. The latter have just begun to lift their head only after the advent of the British Government and if they are apprehensive rightly or wrongly that their present progress, slow though it may be, may receive a sudden check, if not an actual set-back, they are not to be much blamed."

"I am, therefore, of opinion that all our energies should for the present be concentrated on educating the masses and then the question of introducing reforms on the lines of Home Rule may be taken up as one within the pale of practical politics.[64]

Shahu had some basic preconditions for the successful execution of Home Rule rights. He had unfolded them in his interview with Mr. Montagu on November 12, 1917. He says, "Princes ought, however, to be able to cope with it. It may be necessary for the Princes to give more rights to the people as Home Rule in British India will be surrounding the territories of Indian States. In order that people should understand the rights given to them, it is absolutely necessary to introduce compulsory primary education in India. It is also necessary in order that Home Rule should be successful that caste system must disappear and inter-marriages should take place; otherwise, there is the fear of the development of oligarchy."[65]

In December 1917, Shahu repeated his arguments in his address to the 'Maratha Educational Conference' at Khamgaon, saying that so long as the social evils were not done away the non-Brahmin community needed the protection and guidance of the British Government. He says, "At present the great cry is about Home rule. The question is whether we are fit for it. We do really wish to have Home Rule. It will give us what we call life-blood. The British Imperial Government had sown the seeds of the idea of Home rule in our mind. My reasoned opinion is that a time will come when we will have to break down the shackles of the present caste system. I look forward to this result in the interest of the general moral and material progress. So long as we have caste dissensions and jealousies among us, we will keep fighting among ourselves and injure our interests. In order to make us worthy of Swaraj, it is very necessary to do away with the evil of the caste system which has been ruinous."

"If castes remain as they are Home Rule in the sense in which it is meant will result in nothing but a kind of oligarchy. This of course does not mean, I may tell once more, that I am against Home rule. Surely we want it. Under the present circumstances, however, we must have the protection and guidance of the British Government until the evil of caste system becomes ineffective. To prevent Home Rule from culminating into oligarchy, we must have communal representation at least for ten years. It will teach us what our rights are. Once we know them, communal representation can be dispensed with."[66]

Later, while refuting charge that he was against the grant of Swarajya to his subjects, Shahu maintains, "Another accusation leveled against me by some newspapers is that I am absolutely against giving self-government to my subjects. This is again a pure myth. In the speech on which this accusation is based, I said, 'But if I may be allowed to express an opinion at his stage, I would only say that I for one, would hesitate to make any constitutional changes in the direction of the reforms until the general level of education among the masses has risen and is at least partially equalized with that of the higher classes. This does not lend any support to the accusation that I am opposed to giving self-government to my people. What I said was that I could not look upon the devolution of political power as safe before the voters of all the castes were educated enough to understand their civil rights."[67]

While such a dust storm was blustering over the social life of Maharashtra, the British government was all set to grant some rights of Home Rule to the people in British India. The Government seemed to have overlooked the stand of Shahu and paid heed to the demands of Tilak and Annie Besant. In a way the Government under obligation had to grant some political rights to the Indians and this they accomplished in the historic announcement of Mr. Montagu and the subsequent grant of reforms in 1919.

Shahu in British India

Shahu had been Championing the cause of the Backward Classes not only within his State but in British India also. He had a heartfelt urge to voice the social exploitation of any kind and protect the interest of the exploited. In one of his addresses at Nasik, in April 1920, he elucidated why he was so interested in the problems of the society in British India. "Being a ruler of a Native State, I am often reproached for speaking in British territories. My first submission is that I am not here as a ruler of a State, but I am here as a friend and servant of the millions of my countrymen whose conditions will excite pity in any one who claims a human heart. In that capacity if my countrymen approach me to solicit my views on any subject, I think it would be a serious breach of the rules of decorum to be silent or to withhold them. Secondly, the Native States are inalienably interwoven with the British Territory. As subjects or as treaty-holders, we are bound to the British Empire and as such there are many interests that are common to us all. I am, therefore, of opinion that by interesting myself in problems affecting the interests of us all, I am not sinning. In fact I regard it my duty to be so interested."[68]

However, the British Government was cautious about Shahu's activities in British India. They contended that his activities provoked the wrath of the Brahmin community and their papers. The Government had its own problems and troubles with the Brahmin Nationalists. They did not want to escalate them on account of their friend, Shahu. In May 1920, the Resident of Kolhapur, Major Wodehouse wrote to Shahu, "As your friend, I should like you not to make any more

speeches, but to make up your mind to devote your energy in working for your state and where there are faults in the administration in removing them."[69]

Wodehouse, in his letter, appreciated Shahu's loyalty to the British and his urge to uplift the masses. But, if Shahu made, he added, speeches in British India, the Brahmin Parties opposing him many of them would not stop at fair criticism, but would vilify him and his administration in the most gross manner.[70]

It is really interesting to note how cleverly Shahu had argued this episode before the Governor of Bombay, Sir George Lloyd, saying feel proud of a Prince who was fighting with an articulate but irresponsible community, i.e. the Brahmins.[71]

It seems, from the contemporary correspondence, that Shahu had to seek the permission for his activities in British India. For instance, he is found writing to Wodehouse that if there be no objection, he would like to preside over the 'All India Depressed Classes Conference', to be held on May, 30, 1920, at Nagpur.[72] Wodehouse did not raise any objection and Shahu could go to Nagpur.

A few days later in the last week of July 1920, the 'Social Conference of non-Brahmin classes' was held at Hubli. Mr. Chikodi, a leader of the non-Brahmins, called on Shahu and invited him to preside over it. Shahu in his turn wrote on the 20th July, to Mr. Montgomerie, Political Secretary to the Government of Bombay, asking for permission to go to Hubli and participate in the Conference.[73] Next day he again wrote to him a second long letter, exposing the schemy and vindictive nature of the Brahmins. He writes, "You must be aware that the extremist papers are spreading the rumour that Government has stopped me from going out and they are chuckling over it and thus leading the people to believe that I lie under displeasure. This naturally annoys me. I think I ought to be permitted to go to Hubli to give a denial to this if not for any other stronger reasons."

"I have been very outspoken and this outspokenness has led to this Brahman howl. The Brahmins no doubt condemn me for the harm already done to their power by my leadership of the Non –Brahmins; but their bitterness is no doubt sharpened by the prospect of the loss to their prestige if I am left to work unhindered. They are very skillful in wielding the weapons of calumny and misrepresentation, and they are making use of these freely and to the fullest extent against me. The vigour of the Brahmin attack is I am led to believe due to their idea that before long they will get more & more power in the Councils & then the Government will be powerless to help and protect me."[74]

Mr. Montgomerie immediately sent a reply to Shahu. His letter reads, "Mr. Chikodi has handed over your letter concerning the proposed meeting at Hubli. Government have no objection to your presiding as proposed at the social Conference where I have no doubt you will give sound advice on some subject touching the physical and moral development of the backward classes."[75]

Mr. Montgomere's letter was a clear indication of the fact that the Government did not want Shahu to make speech on the Political, not even the social problems of the non-Brahmin society. He was expected to give sermons on 'physical and moral development' of the backward classes!

Shahu made two speeches at Hubli. He, however, did not seem to have followed the directions of the British Government. Though he spoke of need of physical and moral development of the Backward Classes, he devoted major portion of his speeches to the benefits of the British Rule and the exploitation of the masses at the hands of wily Brahmins. Besides he touched the various subjects from the terrorist movement to Hindu-Muslim unity. [76]

Shahu had in his mind an ambition to dominate the political field of India. In 1918, when he learned that the King-Emperor had decided to call a 'War Cabinet' and 'Conference of the Empire' including dominion of India, he expressed his desire to attend the Conference as a representative of the Princes of the Native States. Later, in 1920 he had thought of contesting the election to the Imperial Legislative Council On June 15, 1920, he wrote to Sir. John Wood, Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, desiring that he should be in the public eye at such a time and that the people should judge him by his acts and not by the falsehood circulated about him in the Brahmin Press. He went on saying, "If I am elected they (the people) will come to know what I have been doing for the masses and also how I should be working for them in the Council." The Government of India however, informed him that the Princes of India were not eligible for contesting the elections to the Imperial Legislative Council. [77]

Shahu, Hostile Brahmin Press and the British

The Character assassination of Shahu and his family continued unceasingly. With a few exception like the 'Sandesh' the entire Brahmin press had gone hostile and some of them like the Rajkaran, Loksangrah and Lokshahi had crossed the limits of decency, often vilifying Shahu and ladies of the Royal family. Even a learned Pandit once seated on the Gadi of Shankarachrya, Dr. Kurtakoti was not behind in this vilification campaign. He had written an article making a mean attack against the Kolhapur Princess, Akkasaheb. [78]

In his letter of the 27th January 1921.to Col. Merewether, the Resident of Kolhapur. Shahu pointedly refers to the malicious criticism directed against the members of the Royal Family: "I have fallen a victim to newspaper criticism. So long as the criticism is directed against me I do not mind at all. But herewith I send you three cuttings with the translations. One against my daughter, the second is against my daughter-in-law and the third charges my son to be effeminate and soon there would be one against my widowed daughter-in-law and my wife. I have been prevented myself from making public speeches .....Why should these papers be not prevented from criticizing me? When Government has been kind enough to prevent

meetings against me in the British Districts as in the Belgaum District why should the Press be not prevented from defaming me and my family?"

He added that the Press in British India was passing such harsh remarks and rumours that would cause his subject to revolt against him. He says, "Rumours were started that beef was taught to be eaten in my Sontali Camp. That beef was mixed with mutton and offered for sale in Kolhapur Market and also it appeared in the local paper that bones besmeared with blood were thrown in the kitchen of a Brahmin house. One is naturally reminded of a similar mean trick that was played in 1857 when a rumour was set afloat that the cartridges were besmeared with pig fat. So the newspapers in British Districts may cause trouble and even mutiny against Prince or even the Resident. Such malicious writings once caused the people to attempt against the life of Col. Ferris with bomb and bullet."

Shahu urges the British Government to control the Press; otherwise Princes should not be held responsible for the problem of internal peace in their State. He warns the Government that if the ladies of the Royal House are 'brought in British Press' his relatives and the Marathas in general both in Kolhapur and British districts might resort to violence. He continues, "We are always in bad odours of the people in British Districts because I do not allow anti-British meetings to be held in my territory especially as I had bomb case and I prosecuted seditionists and drove them out of my territory. While a few discontented men like Brahmin Kulkarnis and Rajaramians raise a howl against me in papers in British Districts and make people believe in things which are not true and create discontent and ill-feeling among my subject. These people used to hold meetings in British districts and join hands with the anti-British leaders."

In the end Shahu makes a fervent appeal to the British Government to take action against the Press, as the honour of the Royal Family was at stake. He writes, "The Press argues that when the Government has the power to stop these writings under the Press Act and since they do not choose to exercise it in this connection, Government wants to encourage such writings against me. I cannot touch these papers, they being in the British territory. The press writing is causing ill feeling among my subjects, I have therefore to request to you to kindly convey my request to Government to stop the Press from writing against me under the Press Act. I can hear worse criticism against myself. But what have the members of my family done to deserve such cruel exposure? I therefore again request that you will kindly help me in saving the honour of my family."[79]

The Brahmins in the Deccan had established the Daxini Sansthan Hitwardhini Sabha for the welfare of the people in the Deccan States. The Committee of the Sabha consisted mostly of the Chitpavan Brahmins of Poona and their sole object, according to Shahu, was to blackmail the rulers that had not yet gone into their fold. He added that they had been publishing in the Chitpavan Press a series of articles against Shahu's administration, and mischievously misrepresenting

the facts. Urging the Government to take strong measures against such body of agitators Shahu makes explicit request for help to the British. "The Sabha has now the cheek to request the victims of their foul abuses to furnish them with material to be twisted and moulded as they like to gain their object. Nothing could be more insulting than this. I do not know why Government should not take steps to prevent such meetings being held in the British Territory. Government have taken measures to prevent the peaceful law abiding citizens from being harassed by the volunteers, and declared that body as unlawful. These measures protect only the British subjects; but there is no legislation, to my knowledge, which can safeguard the interests of Princes. Are not Princes the allies of the British Government and are not the Indian States parts of the British Empire? Hence is it not incumbent on the Government to afford adequate protection to the Princes from the indiscriminate attacks in the British Press and the Platform? Something on the above lines may, I humbly think, be done to protect the loyal Princes. No Prince will ever allow his State to be made a centre of agitation against British Government nor would the latter tolerate it if he did. Why then should steps not be taken to put down with a strong hand all attempts on the part of the British subjects to dabble in affairs of Indian States? If Government will do so it will only strengthen the bonds of union and friendship between them and the Princes."

In the end, Shahu alleges that such bodies are organized by professional agitators from the British territory and backed by malcontents from the States. He appeals to the Government to warn their subjects that they have nothing whatever to do with the Indian Princes and their administration. [80]

The Indian Press Act of 1910, muzzling the Indian Press, was repealed by the Government of India in the early part of 1922, on the recommendations of Sir. Tej Bhadur Sapru, who was then the law member of the Central Assembly.[81] Shahu got afraid of the fact that the rulers were bound to lose the Protection cover of the Act of 1910. He seemed to have become restless and he, in state of anxiety, prepared a bunch of notes on 'The Repeal of the Press Act.' The document runs into 21 full-scape typed pages and is still unpublished; hence the importance. Here are some of the important passages from his 'Notes'. :

1. Calling the Indian Princes as an asset to the Government, he says, "The Press Act has been repealed. By its repeal the interests of the Indian Princes have been thrown overboard. Now that this restriction is removed the Princes will find themselves unduly exposed to the indiscriminate attacks of the Press..... Government should be requested to make adequate provision for the safety of the Princes, who are as important an asset to Government as their Army, Navy or Police who should be considered as a part of them and who deserve similar protection." [82]

2. Regarding the 'Campaign of Calumny' against the Princes, Shahu maintains, "In and out of season, openly and under cover of fair comment, irresponsible writers, taking advantage of the peculiar position of the Princes, which does not admit of

their seeking the protection afforded by the British Law without seriously impairing their dignity and status, are vilifying not only their administration, but their person and the members of their family and creating hatred, disaffection and contempt among their subjects.....

Every day the Press proclaims that the only cure for the ills of the Native States' subjects is to shake off personal rule this to be accomplished by heroic deeds, self-sacrifice and martyrdom on the part of the young. If as a consequence the unprotected and defenceless Princes are attacked by a violent mob, there is nothing for them to fall back upon to defend themselves or to quell the outbreak."[83]

3. While commenting on the subject 'The Princes and the Ordinary Criminal Law' Shahu has to say,

"One of the remedies, no doubt, open to the Princes for their protection is to have recourse to the ordinary Criminal Law Courts of British India. But their dignity and status do not permit them to do so. Besides prosecution under the ordinary law gives rise to adverse criticism and unhealthy excitement in the press, not to speak of the cheap martyrdom of the offender. Thus the aim of the prosecution is defeated. The agitators in British India take advantage of this anomalous position and launch attacks against them with impunity."

"Now that the Press Act is swept away from the Statute Book, there is no knowing to what length these rabid attacks would go. If the Princes are left at the mercies of the Extremist Press, they will have no choice but to join the Extremist side. God forbid such a contingency."[84]

Under the title 'No Criticism: Fair or Unfair' Shahu writes.

"The Princes are responsible to the Paramount Power for good administration in their States. And hence there appears to be no reason why their administration should be subjected to severe adverse criticism by irresponsible agitators. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to put a stop to all comments whatever in the British press about the Indian States."[85]

5. Expressing his opinion on 'The Public Opinion and the Government Policy', Shahu says, "In India, owing to the existence of innumerable castes and creeds, the so-called public opinion is not the public opinion .the few noisy agitators who constitute public opinion are hostile to Government, which they call Satanic and do not hesitate to say that they would prefer the Turks or Germans to the British. The public, fed on these tenets, would not of course help Government; but, on the contrary, would stand in the way of the Princes, who are ever ready to come to the assistance of Government whenever an occasion arises. Thus, it is hardly necessary to point out that the Princes, who are the pillars of the Empire, would cease, under these circumstances, to be of any use whatever to Government. The poisonous seeds of sedition if not promptly destroyed might take root, and it would be best, if possible, to completely eradicate them."[86]

6. Raising very interesting point of 'Reciprocity of States', Shahu logically argues - "Writers on International Law lay great stress on the doctrine of reciprocity of States: which implies mutual obligations to be fulfilled by Powers in alliance. Now, if anything seditious against the British Government appears in the Press within our territories, we say: "No sedition against the Paramount Power" and promptly punish it. In the same way it would not be unreasonable to expect similar consideration at the hands of the Paramount Power."[87]

7. Urging the Viceroy to use his 'Discretionary Power' Shahu concludes his 'Notes' in following manner - "In conclusion it may be said that in order to afford due protection to the Rulers of Indian States against the attacks of the Press in British India the only course left for Government is for the Viceroy to use his discretionary power and make such offence extraditable. It is almost impossible to get the legislature to make legislation penalizing such attacks. Extremists won't force the Princes to give power to the people but they will force them secretly to work against the Government and help them in their anti-Government activities. Government should, therefore, take proper steps so that the Princes should always remain loyal and should not be won over to the side of extremists and rowdies."[88]

Non-Cooperation Movement

The Non-Cooperation Movement started by Gandhi, was not an accident in history. It had got a political and national background created by the past events such as the Home Rule Movement, Mont-Ford Reforms, Rowlatt Act, the consequent Satyagraha Movement Jallianwalla Bagh Massacre etc. These events were followed by sad demise of Tilak in August 1920. Before Tilak's exist, however, Gandhi had assumed the leadership of the powerful agitation against the Rowlatt Act during March-April 1919. He subsequently, emerged as the great leader of the Congress and the Country.

Before analysing Shahu's stand in the respect of Non-Cooperation Movement, it should be noted that he was to be a loyal Prince within the framework of the British Indian Empire; and that he, besides his proclaimed loyalty, was expected to help the Paramount Power to resist any of the anti-British movements in India. Again, one more point should be noted. That is he was over-enthusiastic in exhibiting his loyalty to the British. Bearing these points in mind, one should go through the contemporary correspondence.

In the heat of the Satyagrah agitation against Rollatt Act, Shahu had on April 15, 1919 written a letter to Sir. George Lloyd, the Governor of Bombay. In the beginning he states that he had been absolutely loyal to the King Empire and helpful to the British in putting down the wave of sedition. He adds that the Rowlatt Act is misinterpreted and misunderstood by the public and that when people know that Act is only intended for the worst type of seditionist, there will not be so much of rowdysim among the masses. He, further more proposes to the Government to translate the Act in various vernaculars and read over to the people, thereby

removing misunderstanding about it. If the Government permitted, he would publish it on his own.

Shahu goes on saying, "You have always been calling us, the Princes, pillars of the British Empire. Now why should not the Princes come forward and help the Government for stopping this movement of the passive resistance. I am quite willing to work on any line Government may propose."

The rest of the letters contains Shahu's suggestions to the Government regarding how they should deal with the 'ring leaders' of the movement, including the ladies like Sarojini Naidu and Avantika Gokhale.[89]

Later, on August 10, 1920, Shahu wrote to the Governor of Bombay, offering his voluntary services to the Government in fighting the Non-Cooperation Movement. Appreciating his offer, the governor replied the Government was not in need of such help at the time.[90]

In September 1920, Shahu was in Bombay. On the 20th instant, he wrote a detailed letter to Mr. Montgomerie, the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, regarding the Non-Cooperation Movement. He desired to publish his manifesto condemning the Movement. He writes, "you are aware that the Non-Cooperation movement is now spreading like wild fire all over the country and it is high time that loyalists and well-wishers of the Empire should come forward to check the contagion. You know that my house has been held in great reverence by all the Marathas and backward classes and they look upon me to be trustworthy as I try to release them from the Brahmin Yoke. I, therefore, thinking of publishing my manifesto condemning the movement and appealing to all the backward classes to keep aloof from it."

He further adds that he has been asking his friends and all who share his views not to content themselves with being passive dissenters, but 'to be up and doing' and that it was their bounden duty to protect the masses from the impending danger.

Shahu's estimate of Gandhi was quite interesting. He says, "Mr. Gandhi is a mere dreamer, thoroughly unpractical and quite out of touch with the mass of people. The latter however are like sheep and any shepherd may lead them into a ditch. Is it not our sacred duty at such a critical time to strain every nerve to prevent such a mischief?"[91]

He was, on 25th September, felicitated by the merchants of Crawford Market. About twenty five people, mostly the workers, attended the gathering. There Shahu appealed to the people, not to join the Non-Cooperation Movement but help those who did not cooperate with the Movement. He further advised them that with the help of the British, they should achieve educational progress and fight for their rights.[92]

On November 6, 1920 Shahu again wrote to Mr. Montgomerie, furnishing the summary of his conversation with the Governor of Bombay. He had

met the Governor on the 5th of the instant. Referring to the breaking of his meeting at Poona Shahu told the Governor that it was all prearranged for insulting him only. About Gandhi and his Non-Cooperation movement and the involvement of the Brahmins in it, he expressed his opinion: "From the time of Sir. Lee Warner to this day I have been following the Government policy and that of uplifting the non-Brahmin masses and wherever I have gone I am sure Gandhi would not have any strong footing. The Brahmins have arranged the practice of non-co-operation in a way which would not injure their interests but would injure others. Pleaders are not going to give up their practice but they will induce some of the wayward and indolent boys to leave school and colleges and take up extremist propaganda."

He laid stress on the need of combined efforts of the Non-Brahmin Associations and the Satyashodhak Samaj to work vigorously to counteract 'Gandhi's mischief'. He, further more, promised the Governor that if no-body comes forward to do that work, he would render his services to the Government for the purpose."[93]

Shahu's over enthusiasm in 1921, in helping the British Government to suppress the Non-Cooperation Movement brought him in trouble. It so happened that he had prepared notes on the subject 'Non-cooperation and how to remedy it' and got it printed in a press at Bombay. Unfortunately, the pamphlet containing the notes leaked out and was published in the 'Bombay Chronicle' under the title 'Smash this Movement.' The paper maintained that the notes were meant for private circulation among Shahu's 'friends and those concerned.' In one of the notes, Shahu says, "The Government have uptil now used no preventive measures and so this mischievous movement is spreading like wild-fire all over the country. If Government do not use its military and police to counteract this movement, then what is the use of military and police?"

The influential and loyal newspapers, creation of a non-Brahmin Party, pledged to fight Brahmin bureaucracy and to educate the Rayats were the main measures suggested by Shahu to the Government.He maintained that the Rayats were 'prejudiced by the rabid speeches of Gandhi, Shaukat Ali and Mohammed Ali.'[94]

Publication of Shahu's Notes, naturally, raised hue and cry among the Brahmin papers. For instance, Shahu's antagonist, the Kesari roared, "Those who had known the Chhatrapati's machinations since 1902 would not be surprised at this revelation. It was the symbol of his Machiavellian spirit that he created a Jagadguru and financed journalists and helped the Satyashodhakites."[95]

Though Shahu had at times described Gandhi as a man playing 'mischief' in India, it seems, however, that it was all about to please the British Government. At heart, he had an attraction and reverence for Gandhi. In one of the gatherings of the backward classes at Nasik, he had hailed Gandhi as 'Avatari' person![96]

It looks rather unbelievable that Shahu had once met the Mahatma. In February 1922, he had gone to Kurukshetra 'under the pretext of having shoot' and met Gandhi. [97] Certainly, they must have discussed the political as well as social problems facing the Country. It was a meeting of two great souls of India indeed!

Hence, it would some times be hasty to draw conclusions from Shahu's statements on Gandhi made in his correspondence, though they are authentic and contemporary.

Shivaji Memorial

The foundation ceremony of Shivaji memorial at Pune was one of the important events in the life of Shahu. The British historians had painted Shivaji the Great, the ancestor of Shahu and hero of the Marathas, as a plunderer. By laying the foundation of Shivaji Memorial at the hands of the Prince of Wales, the Representative of the British Crown, Shahu desired to declare that Shivaji was a national hero, acclaimed by the British people.

On August 29, 1921, Shahu had written to Sir. J.B.Wood, the Secretary to foreign and Political Department, Government of India, requesting him to include the Shivaji Memorial and the Maratha war Memorial functions in the programme of the Prince's visit to India in November 1921. [98] On September 1, Shahu wrote a personal letter to Lord Readings, the Viceroy of India, expressing 'heart felt wish of the Martha Community to associate the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales with the laying of the foundation stone of Shivaji Memorial at Poona.' [99]

In the beginning the Viceroy showed a favorable sign.[100] Later, he, however, said that Shivaji Memorial Programme could not be included at such late stage. This was an unexpected shock to Shahu who all the way went to Simala and saw the Viceroy on September 21. The Viceroy had some misunderstanding which was cleared by Shahu in course of discussion. At last the former yielded to the demand of the latter. [101] In the following November, Shahu again visited Delhi for attending the session of Chamber of Princes. On the 6th of the instant, Shahu and the Maharaja of Gwalior met the Viceroy and were taken aback to know that he had again changed his mind. Perhaps, he seemed to be afraid of the disturbances during the Prince's visit to Poona. He, however, outwardly refused the demand on sectional and communal ground. To this, Shahu submitted to him series of arguments which he, later on, listed in a document titled 'Purport of the Conversation at an Interview' with the Viceroy. [102] Some of his arguments are worth-noting here -

1. "Personally I firmly believe that it would be most ungraceful and impolitic if the programme is now changed and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales does not perform the ceremony personally."
2. "Every breast in Maharashtra is now delighted at the prospect of seeing His Royal Highness doing honour personally to our greatest national hero by laying the foundation stone to perpetuate his memory. Patils and peasants have been invited for the occasion and they will be coming in large numbers from remote places.....

Princes and Princesses with their large retinues have promised to come from all parts..... Magnificent shows have been arranged for the occasion.... In fact elaborate preparations are now in progress to do honour to the Prince."

3. "If it is now announced that the inauguration ceremony of laying the foundation stone is not to be performed by His Royal Highness, the masses and the Princes will be bitterly disappointed. They will all receive a shock the effect of which may prove far reaching. Loyal and patriotic demonstrations, which have been carefully arranged, will be interrupted and in the place misunderstanding and distrust will arise. There will be a large field for Non-Cooperators, whose activities will receive new impetus, to invent and circulate false reports to prejudice the masses against Government and the Princes."

4. "The war Memorial and the Shivaji Memorial are really two Sister Functions. The one is a monument in honour of the Maratha combatants of all castes and creeds and the other will be a Memorial in honour of the greatest Indian Hero. The word Maratha in the Deccan is used in two senses. It means the whole of the population of Maharashtra, the great nation. It is also sometimes (though rarely) used in narrower sense as applying to the Maratha Community only. The Maratha Memorial is for all who fought and fell in the Great War-without distinction of caste and creed. Shivaji is the hero of the whole of the population of the Deccan and he is esteemed and worshipped by Brahmins and others alike. It is not at all right to say that the Shivaji Memorial is a communal movement. It is a provincial or a national movement."

5. "If the foundation is not laid by the Prince, it will create an impression that the Government hates Shivaji and the Maratha Community in general. The remedy, which the Government think will please some section of the population, is worse than the disease itself. The vast-majority will be displeased for the pleasure of a few opponents of the Maratha Community. If the Government of India stop the Prince now, the result will be that my face would be blackened permanently. The Bombay Government will have some share of the same fate and I do not know if the Government of India will be out of it."

6. "If the Prince of Wales in accordance with the wishes of the extremist Press gives up the laying down of the foundation of the Shivaji Memorial, the extremist Press would think that it has succeeded by its arguments and its virulent articles to defeat the policy of Government."

7. "The proceedings at this function will give a crushing blow to the attempts of the Non-Cooperators to boycott the Prince's visit and will demonstrate beyond a shadow of doubt how India is loyal to the core to the British Grown."

8. "I shall in future be distrusted by persons whose confidence I have so far invariably enjoyed and I shall be treated with contempt and ridicule by that section which has always hated me for my loyal conduct towards Government I would under the circumstances beg of His Excellency that he should exempt me and my staff, as

an act of grace, from attending the function in Bombay and Poona during His Royal Highness' visit."

"In conclusion, I earnestly request H. E. the Viceroy for the sake of Izzat and Abru of the two Indian Princes that the progremme may not be changed and the foundation may be laid by His Royal Highness." [103]

Shahu's last argument worked like a miracle and the Viceroy once again yielded to the wishes of Shahu. Meanwhile, Shahu had decided to convene the Patil Conference at Poona and invitations both of the Conference and Shivaji Memorial function were sent to the Patils all over Maharashtra. The Maharaja of Gwalior was requested to preside over the conference which was held on November 18, 1921. Thousands of Patils had come over to Poona to attend the Conference and the subsequent function.

The Prince of Wales arrived at Poona and Shahu, along with brother Princes and thousands of Patils and non-Brahmin followers gave a tremendous ovation to him at the Poona station. The Royal procession drove to the Shaniwar Wada site, where the foundation of the Maratha War Memorial was laid at the hands of the Prince. The Prince on that occasion, said, "This memorial is not confined to any caste or creed. Mahrattasa and Mahomedans, Mahars, Berads, Pindaris, all will find in it a common object of enduring pride.....Poona is the home of Shivaji's boyhood, who not only founded an Empire, but created a nation. By the influence of this Country, a peasant population was transformed into a race of soldiers." [104]

This was immediately followed by the second function at Bhamburda Village near Poona, where the Prince laid the foundation Stone of Shivaji Memorial. Welcoming the Prince, Shahu said, "We owe to your Royal House an ever-lasting gratitude for inaugurating wise and liberal policy of throwing open to all alike the doors of knowledge and creating in us a sense of self-respect and a spirit of citizenship, which are the natural consequences of liberal education."

Referring to the memory of Shivaji the Great, Shahu said, "Your Royal Highness can well imagine the intensity of feelings of reverence and pride with which the Marathas cherish the memory of the great Shivaji who has immortalized the name Maratha in the pages of history and who has instilled into them the soldierly qualities which were manifested in the great World War." [105]

In his address, the Prince paid a glowing tribute to Shivaji, by praising him as one of the India's greatest soldiers and statesmen.' He added, "And what can be more fitting than that these monuments of glory of the past and of today should be inaugurated in the not only the representative of the House of Shivaji, but also of those Princes and Chiefs who are descended from the soldiers and statesmen of the Empire which he found? It is with special pleasure that I learn that you intend to associate the name of Shivaji with important educational institutions and that your aim is to make the Mahratta people no less renowned in the arts of peace than in those of war" [106]

The Shivaji Memorial Function was a great success to Shahu. The Prince of Wales, along with high dignitaries, witnessed Shahu's unparalleled hold over the non-Brahmin masses. He was their natural leader. While congratulating Shahu for his splendid success, Sir George Lloyd said, "I know the immense of amount of trouble taken by Your Highness over every detail; but I am sure that the splendid welcome given by the people to His Royal Highness will be to Your Highness a full reward for the all the labor spent." [107]

However, the British Press, naturally, got uneasy and renewed their attacks against shahu. Later on January 1, 1922, he writes to Col. Mere whether, "The Press in British India seems to be much annoyed at the success of Shivaji Memmorial and has started a ruthless campaign of Vilification against me by way of revenge." [108]

The event of laying foundation of the two Memorials at the hands of the Prince of Wales was of special significance. It was Shahu who had arranged the visit of the Prince with great efforts and sagacity. Thousands of Patils and Rayats had come to Poona out of their respect for Chhatrapati Shivaji and Shahu. The event underlined the extraordinary influence Shahu could exercise upon them. It also witnessed the Prince of Wales publically honoring Shivaji by calling him a greatest soldier and statesman and creator of a nation. That was the final achievement of the event and its credit solely went to Shahu.

Shahu's Socalled Loyalty to the British Crown

At the out set, it should be noted that the Princes of India had to rule their States within the given framework of power. Unswerving loyalty to the British Crown was its primary condition. Shahu was not an exception to this basic tenet of British Paramountcy. The British were more vigilant and watchful of him as he had undertaken the mission of awakening the masses, especially the backward classes. No doubt, the British were the champion of democracy and freedom; but at the same time they could not ignore the fact that awakening of the masses would one day create serious challenge to the Paramount Power. They however, could not oppose Shahu's mission. On the contrary, they showed their sympathy to his movement.

It is already noted how Shahu had been expressing his loyalty time and again, during the meeting with British Officials or in his public meetings in the society. Any scholar looking superficially at his expression of loyalty, without taking into consideration his compulsions, might easily come to the conclusion that Shahu was out and out pro-British. And that would not be an accurate judgment of history. For then, such a judgement would have to be passed on Dadabhai Naoroji, Ranade, Tilak and even Gandhi. Because all of them are found openly professing loyalty to the British Crown while conducting the freedom movement. Tilak had at the beginning of the World War, in 1914, published a declaration, professing his loyalty and promise of assistance to the British Government in their war-efforts. Excepting the Revolutionaries, no leader of freedom movement could afford to call himself as

disloyal. Because, in those times, not being loyal to the Government was considered sedition and how could seditionist openly conduct the movement of any kind?

The British Government had more than once accused Tilak of sedition for vehemently critising the Government in the Kesari and sentences him to imprisonment. He, however, argued that critising unjust deeds of the Government did not amount to sedition.

In the above declaration, Tilak says, "My efforts are not ment to do away with British Rule; atrocious activities of the terrorists are against my nature." He, furthermore, appeals the people to help the Government to the best of their abilities in their war efforts. He, adds, "This proves our loyalty towards Government and our desire to help them are natural and unyielding and thus we fulfill our duties and responsibilities with sense of loyalty." [109] If a scholar draws his conclusion on the basis of the above statement that Tilak was a loyalist, it would be totally unhistorical. His statement of loyalty should be considered as a diplomatic move and not the expression of his heartfelt desire.

As a matter of fact, the loyalty, expressed by Tilak, Gandhi or even Shahu, could not be regarded as genuine. These persons were great patriots. And no patriot would ever desire that his motherland be permanently enslaved by a foreign power like the British. The only question was how long should the British Rule continue. Tilak and Gandhi wanted to achieve Swarajya at the earliest, while Shahu wished it to postpone it till the backward classes were eligible to enjoy the rights of Swarajya. Against this background one should judge whether Shahu was truly loyal to the British imperialists or otherwise.

To many national leaders like Justice Ranade the British Rule was a divine dispensation. Hence they acclaimed many positive aspects of the British Rule such as peace and order, education, railways, introduction of the values of equality before law, liberalism, democracy etc. Not that they were unaware of the political slavery imposed by the British. But they were aware of the compulsions of time and felt that the Indians should remain loyal to the British in the larger interest of the Country. So in the first phase of the Congress, they were found unfurling the Union Jack and singing British national anthem in its annual session! [110] Phule, though on different ground, had expressed similar loyalty to the British crown. He had welcomed the British Rule, freeing the depressed classes from the Brahmin autocracy. [111]

At one place, Shahu says, "It is the wish of the providence that we have become part of the British Empire for the betterment of India. Our interests have merged with theirs" [112] He had often maintained that the Indians should remain loyal to the British and express their gratitude. Thus Shahu's views are not much different from those of national leaders like Ranade or the social revolutionaries like Phule. According to Shahu, the peace and order in the country and opening of doors of education to all were two major boons of the British Rule He was optimistic

about the political freedom too. He says, "Those, who gave us nectar of education, would one day certainly free us from bondage. Whatever you want, ask the Government in the same way child asks from his parents with love. They would definitely give."[113]

Shahu felt that the principle of equality was the gift of British Rule to the Indians for which they should remain ever grateful and loyal to the British. He says, "The British for the first time applied the principle of equality to administration. They declared that all subjects should have equal rights; similar laws would be applied to all, injustice of granting punishments on the basis of castes would not be permitted. Their missionaries were the first to establish schools and set examples of treating the untouchable children with affection. The other European countries like Holland ,Belgium do not develop their colonial subjects by educating them or otherwise. However, the British are good at this. Moreover, they are granting us Swaraj when many among us are reluctant to accept it. This is so great of them! That we should remain loyal to the British Empire which treats everyone with equality need not be reiterated. We are under their many many obligations."[114]

There was certainly some difference between a loyal political leader and a loyal Ruler of a Native State. A political leader could, at times, castigate the British Government, while a ruler of the State could not enjoy that liberty. Shahu had his own compulsions as a ruler of the Native State. He had to do tight rope walking. He had to achieve balance between the loyalty to the Paramount power and of uplifting of the backward classes on the other.

In the end, it is imperative to note that Shahu's concept of Swarajya or freedom was not parochial. It embodies freedom both political and social. Shahu's first priority was social freedom. He was not averse to the political freedom of the Country. He was a true patriot. And no genuine patriot could be an enemy of freedom of the country. His only objection was that the Congress, seeking freedom of the country, was a body dominated by the Brahmin Community and that as the masses were incapable of enjoying the right of that freedom, the Brahmins were sure to swallow them. This was bound to help grow their antocracy. Hence, his opposition to the freedom Movement. But that opposition was not to be a perpetual one. Time would, Shahu felt, come, when the masses would be fully confident and eligible for enjoyment of freedom in the fullest sense.

References and Footnotes

1. RSSG, p. 48
2. RSC, Shahu's Letter to Muir Mackenzie, March 24, 1910, p. 60
3. Ibid, p. 77
4. VSM, Vol. I, pp. 103-105
5. RSC, p. 94
6. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 6, pp. 6-10
7. Ibid, pp. 6-10
8. Ibid, pp. 6-10
9. Ibid, Letter No. 64, p. 78
10. Ibid, Letter No. 61, p. 75
11. Ibid, Letter No. 65, p. 80
12. Ibid, Letter No. 67, p. 83
13. RSC, p. 172
14. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 49, pp. 57-58
15. SCRR, p. 161
16. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 19, p. 25
17. SSM, p. 263
18. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 26, p. 31
19. Ibid, Letter No. 29, p. 34
20. Ibid, Letter No. 41, 43, pp. 48, 51
21. RSC, pp. 255-256
22. Ibid, Letter No. 62, p. 76
23. Ibid, Letter No. 63, p. 77
24. Ibid, Letter No. pp. 84-85
25. Ibid, Letter No. 69, 70, pp. 86-88
26. Ibid, Letter No. 72, p. 92
27. Ibid, Letter No. 84, pp. 106-108
28. SCRR, p. 149
29. SSM, pp. 251-252
30. SCRR, p. 172
31. Ibid, p. 172
32. Kesari, June 18, 1907
33. SCRR, pp. 173-174
34. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 152, p. 191
35. SCRR, p. 178

36. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 155, p. 198
37. SCRR, p. 182
38. Ibid, p. 182
39. Ibid, p. 180
40. Ibid, p. 183
41. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 192, p. 253
42. SCRR, p. 187
43. RSCP, Vol. V, Introduction, p. 28
44. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 207, 210, 213, 220, 244, pp. 272-273, 276, 279, 288, 326
45. Ibid, Letter No. 200, p. 263
46. Ibid, Letter No. 201, pp. 265-266
47. Ibid, Letter No. 202. p. 267
48. SCRR, p. 193
49. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 208, p. 274
50. RSC, p. 207
51. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 225, p. 299
52. Ibid, Letter No. 266, p. 300
53. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 245, pp. 327-328
54. Ibid, Letter No. 295, p. 378
55. Ibid, Letter No. 302, p. 385
56. RSCP, Vol. V, Letter No. 319, pp. 407-408
57. SCRR, p. 197
58. Ibid, p. 197
59. RSCP, Vol. IV, Letter No. 1, p. 1
60. Ibid, p. 1
61. RSCA, p. 17
62. SLT, Vol. VI, pp. 506-507
63. Ibid, pp. 777-778
64. RSCP, Vol. VII, pp. 471-472
65. Ibid, p. 488
66. SCRR, pp. 296-297
67. Ibid, p. 409
68. MSSC, Vol. II, p. 493
69. SCRR, p. 420
70. Ibid
71. Shahu Papers, Unpublished Letter No. R – 11886/87, 8 June, 1920
72. RSCP, Vol. IX, Letter No. 50, p. 93
73. Ibid, Letter No. 87, p. 158
74. Ibid, Letter No. 89, pp. 160-161
75. Ibid, Letter No. 90, p. 163

76. Ibid, Letter No. 90, 91 pp. 163-173
77. SCRR, pp. 309-310, 428
78. Ibid, p. 78
79. RSCP, Vol. IX, Letter No. 157, pp. 286-288
80. Ibid, Letter No. 285, pp. 489-491
81. SFF, Vol. XI, p. 1024
82. Shahu Papers, Unpublished, Letter No. R - 6901
83. Ibid, Letter No. R - 6910
84. Ibid, Letter No. R -6914
85. Ibid, Letter No. R – 6918-19
86. Ibid, Letter No. R - 6921
87. Ibid, Letter No. R - 6923
88. Ibid, Letter No. R - 6929
89. Shahu Papers, Unpublished, Letter No. R – 9437-39
90. SCRR, p. 440
91. Shahu Papers, Unpublished, Letter No. R - 11693
92. SCRR, p. 445
93. Shahu papers, Unpublished, Letter No. R – 12555-57
94. SCRR, pp. 468-469
95. Ibid, p. 471
96. RSCP, Vol. IX, Letter No. 41, p. 79-83
97. SCRR, p. 494
98. RSCP, Vol. IX, Letter No. 226, pp. 409-410
99. Ibid, Letter No. 234, p. 419
100. Ibid, Letter No. 240, p. 428
101. SCRR, pp. 481-482
102. RSCP, Vol. IX, Letter No. 261, pp. 465-460
103. Ibid, pp. 456-460
104. RSMB, p. 138
105. Ibid, pp. 141-142
106. Ibid, pp. 144-145
107. SCRR, p. 486
108. RSCP, Vol. IX, Letter No. 285, pp. 489-490
109. SKV, Vol. II, pp. 454-457
110. MJP, p. 250
111. MPSV, pp. 388-389
112. RSCP, p. 186
113. Ibid, p. 186
114. RSMB, pp. 90-91

Chapter VI
Shahu's Reflections on Native States And British Paramountcy

It is significant to know what the constitutional position Kolhapur State was holding before the advent of the British Power; or how the British viewed the historical background of Kolhapur State. It should be noted that Kolhapur occupied a unique place in the galaxy of the Native States not only in the South, but also in the North. The States of Baroda and Gwalior were, no doubt, bigger States than Kolhapur. But they were not sovereign in their own rights, when they were created in the Peshwa Period. Then owed their allegiance to the Peshwa or the Chhatrapati of Satara. Against this background Kolhapur State was sovereign in its own right, when it was founded by Queen Tarabai and it did not owe any allegiance to any paramount power in India.

The Nazarana Issue

We have one important document, dated March 6, 1884, regarding the issue of Nazarana on the occasion of Shahu's adoption to the Kolhapur Gadi. It is a submission made by the Political Agent of Kolhapur, Col. Reeves, to the Chief Secretary of Government of Bombay. In the beginning Col. Reeves gives a brief history of the Kolhapur State right from the treaty of Warna in 1731. He writes "It is clear that ever since the conclusion of the treaty of A. D. 1731 between the Rajas of Satara and Kolhapur, the latter becomes a separate State over which its own Rajas have held sovereignty in their own right. They did not owe allegiance to or acquire their power from either the Rajas of Satara or the Peishwas to whose rights as rulers, the British Government succeeded. The deed of A. D. 1749 by which the Raja of Satara handed over the Government of his territory to the Peishwa also provided that Kolhapur should always be considered an independent sovereignty and up to the downfall of the Peishwas's rule in A. D. 1818, the Kolhapur Rajas were regarded by the Peishwas as independent sovereign Princes governing their territories in their own right, and were addressed by them, in official communications, as their masters or superiors."[1] Col. Reeves, in addition to this, quotes the statement of his predecessor, Col. Anderson, in his letter dated February 20, 1871; which observes, "Thus Kolhapur with reference to the British Government occupies much the same position, as some of the Rajput Principalities, the rulers of which exercise powers of sovereignty in their own right-that is their powers are not derived from any native ruler to whose powers the British Government have succeeded. It also appears to me that it possesses the same inherent right, as that enjoyed by the Rajput Principalities,

of providing for the succession to the throne on the death of a Raja without male issue."[2]

Col. Reeves furthermore writes that since the establishment of Kolhapur as an independent principality in 1731, there have been three adoptions in the Royal family and that on none of these occasions the British Paramount Power has levied Nazarana from the Kolhapur State. The three adoptions were : that of Shivaji II in 1762, that of Rajaram in 1866 and lastly that of Shivaji IV in 1871.[3]

Incidentally, it should be mentioned that Nazarana was a ceremonial payment by a subordinate prince to a paramount power on the occasion of his succession. So this was a kind of succession duty to be decided by the traditions and precedents in history. The British in 1874 had created their own rules of Nazarana in India. A lot of correspondence took place and in the end the Government of Bombay decided that considering the traditions and treaties with Kolhapur 'the Governor in council is of the opinion that..... Kolhapur should be undoubtedly treated as exempt under Nazarana Rules'[4]

How Kolhapur State, sovereign in its own right, was made subordinate to the British Paramount Power in the 19th century has been discussed at length in chapter II of this work. During the long minority period of almost 50 years the power and prestige of the State had reached to its lowest ebb; so much so that its Administrative Councils or the Regency Councils were made to act as pawns in the hands of the British Government.

It was Shahu who had decided to regain the lost power and prestige of Kolhapur State and to certain extent he was successful in his endeavour. For example, he had secured back from the British Government the 'Power of Life and Death' over his subjects or the residuary powers over his feudatories. However, much water had flown under the bridge since the Queen's Declaration in 1858. It is already observed in the preceding chapter how with the rise of Indian Nationalism, the British had begun relinquishing their old prejudices of suspicion and mistrust about the Princes and viewing them as their reliable supporters and friends in their confrontation with National Freedom Movement in India. It is also seen how the Policy of Subordinate Union and later on friendly co-operation was adopted in the place of Policy of Subordinate Isolation. In the Montagu - Chelmsford period, the policy of Non-interference was announced with much fanfare. During his second tour in India in 1917-18, he had declared: 'Our business... is to refrain from interference and to protect the States from it.'[5]

Kolhapur State and the British Paramountcy

With passage of time the British Government felt it more and more expedient to seek the co-operation of the States and began to show more and more interest in redressing their grievances. This is well-exemplified by a letter, dated April 24, 1918, from the Government of Bombay to Shahu Chhatrapati, requesting him to place his 'questions' before the Government, 'regarding the Kolhapur Treaty

(1862) and its interpretations and the usages that have cropped up thereunder.' Shahu took the opportunity and submitted a long confidential letter under the title 'Darbar's observations regarding violation of Darbar's rights, on June 25, 1919, expressing his thankfulness for the 'opportunity to submit, for the sympathetic consideration of Government, the matters.....as falling within the scope of inquiry contemplated in the letter under reference.' [6]

It should be noted here that Shahu's above letter is an unpublished document which amply throws light on how he had deeply studied the relations between Kolhapur State and British Paramountcy. It would not be out of place to highlight some of important points he has raised and discussed in the letter. Each point elucidates how the Paramount Power had been violating the rights of Kolhapur State.

I. The Treaty of 1862 exposed

The Treaty of 1862 was the first and foremost point in Shahu's observations. This Treaty had been considered as the basis of the relations between Kolhapur State and the British Government. Shahu, while severely criticizing it, observes that the Treaty was made under certain peculiar circumstances and intended to be binding upon the then 'Raja' of Kolhapur and obviously not on his successors. He writes, "The Treaty is not only wanting in certain formalities necessary to make it binding permanently on the parties concerned, but it contains and deals with transactions to which no permanence attaches. The obligations embodied therein are the outcome of the peculiar circumstances then existing and were obviously intended to bind the incumbent of the throne at that time, & even that, only temporarily, with respect to certain provision." [7]

Shahu draws the attention of the British Government to an earlier Treaty of 1812 and a later Agreement of 1886 with Kolhapur State wherein a peculiar wording making the Treaty or Agreement binding on the Raja and his successors has been inserted with definite intention. He writes, "The contrast between the wording of this Agreement and that of the Treaty of 1812 and even of the Agreement of 1886, is noteworthy. In the latter two documents the expressions. ' *The Raja of Kolhapur on his own part and on that of his heirs and successors'* and *'the Council of Administration of Kolhapur on behalf of His Highness Shahu Chhatrapati, Raja of Kolhapur, his heirs and successors'* are no doubt advisedly used so as to make the terms binding permanently on all rulers of Kolhapur. The omission of words like those in Italics, from the Agreement of 1862, must also be deliberate."

II. The Foundation of the Treaty Shaken

At the end of above point Shahu has mentioned that he had read a note on the subject before the Conference of the Princes at Delhi in 1919. He has attached the Note in the Appendix-A of the letter. In the beginning of the Note he refers to the

Chapter X of the Montagu – Chelmsford Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms and goes on to say, "The position taken up by Government has been that 'the conditions under which some of the treaties were executed have undergone material changes, and the literal fulfillment of particular obligations which they impose with regard to several States. As an illustration and as a personal grievance, I mention the Agreement with the Kolhapur State, with an apology for stating my episode fully."[8]

Then he goes on narrating in brief the history of the Kolhapur State since its establishment and the background of the Treaty of 1862. Referring to the Preamble of the Treaty, he concludes, "All this will show that the Agreement was made under special circumstances and for the acceptance of "the Raja." The personal nature of the Agreement can also be inferred from the absence of any words indicating that it binds "the heirs and successors" of Raja Shivaji. If, however, it is to be looked upon as Treaty binding by implication on the heirs of the Ruler who accepted it, there are considerations that militate against such an assumption."[9]

What are those considerations which, Shahu says, go on militating against the assumption that the Treaty was binding upon the successors of Raja Shivaji III ? Shahu drops a bombshell in the following paragraph :"The Agreement as stated in the preamble was entered into by the Governor of Bombay in Council when Statute 13, George III Cap. LXIII s. 9 required in 1772 that the consent and approbation of the Governor General in Council should first be obtained, for negotiating or concluding any treaty of peace, or other treaty with Indian Princes and Powers. In June of 1793 by Statute 33, George III, Camp. III s. 42 the Governor of any province was forbidden on pain of dismissal to conclude any treaty, unless in pursuance of express orders from London or Calcutta. In the face of the above and other express statutes, the legal validity of an agreement entered into by any Governor is doubtful, and tacit following cannot legalize what is ab initio not legal. Neither is the said Agreement ratified by the Governor General to the present day, nor is the seal of the Governor General added to it."[10]

In support of his argument, Shahu had quoted a statement from Sir Lee Warner's book, 'Native States in India' saying that, "an Indian Treaty almost invariably runs in the name of the Governor General and not of His Majesty, being headed by its title and object. The names of the contracting parties are recited, and the fact is plainly stated that the British officer executes on behalf of the Governor General in Council." Shahu further argues that none of these formalities have been observed with regard to the Treaty of 1862.[11]

Thus, it is expressively clear from the above arguments of Shahu that he had questioned the very legal validity of the Treaty and thus shaken its very foundation on which the Kolhapur – British Relations rested.

III. The Treaty Articles outdated

On the Treaty Articles, Shahu comments that almost every article of the Treaty is practically and by usage incapable of being acted upon as it stands. He

refers to the Article No 1 which lays down that, "In all the matters of importance the Raja of Kolhapur agrees to follow the advice of the British Government, as conveyed by the Political Officers representing the Government at Kolhapur." Shahu says, "what are 'the matters of importance' is not here defined and the expression is capable of varying with the foot of the interpreter and the adviser. If unfortunately there is some inclination to stand strictly to the terms of the Agreement the expression is sufficient to amount to a negation of all internal powers. The article might not have been always construed narrowly, but there is nothing to safeguard its being so construed." [12] Shahu goes on to says, "I leave it to be imagined form this what I think about my position with this article in the Agreement." [13]

Shahu admits that the above article was introduced when the country was not completely settled and when the consequences of misrule were very serious. But the time had changed. Kolhapur State had been managing the affairs without such a condition. Even the British Government as a mark of their appreciation of administration of Kolhapur State, had decided to withdraw to a large extent from residuary jurisdiction in feudatory Jahagirs. [14]

IV. The Treaty Be Cancelled

However, Shahu as a ruler of the Native State was feeling uncomfortable with this Treaty and had on several occasions raised the issue in his personal discussions with many successive Governors of Bombay who had expressed their sympathy with him. As a result, the British Government had made some modification in the Treaty. But Shahu wanted the Treaty itself to be altogether cancelled. He writes, "Lord Harris who installed me on the Gadi told me that he would do all he could to cancel this agreement. Lord Northcote said that it would be the policy of his Government 'to rehabilitate Kolhapur to its former prestige.' He had also told me that he would leave his remarks about the same. Lord Lamington had promised to do all he could, but he had to leave suddenly." [15]

As for other articles of the Treaty, Shahu says that they have either been changed or have become useless and inoperative. He goes on enlisting the series of such articles with their outdatedness and uselessness and in conclusion demands that, "the Agreement in antediluvian from the beginning to the end, is unsuited to the present conditions, is practically inoperative, is highly derogatory to the dignity of the State and that, therefore, it requires cancellation." [16]

V. No Agreement of A Permanent Nature during Minority

Shahu in the next place raises an important issue of the agreement made during the minority of a Prince and urged the British Government that they should not allow the administration of a Native State to enter into any agreement of a permanent nature on behalf of a minor, much less on that of his heirs and successors. Shahu no doubt admits that the British Government had the true interest of the minor Princes at heart. But each state had problems of various nature and the British Officials might not do justice to them. Shahu says, "But the interests of the State,

involving as they do the prestige of its ruler, and in some cases, as in that of Kolhapur, his relations with guaranteed Jahagirdars under him, are manifold. Some times they conflict with those of the British Government. In such cases the Officers appointed by the latter to administer the State during minority can not be expected to take a firm stand on behalf of the State. Mostly they are out and out officers from the service of British Government. They owe allegiance to that Government and none else, and the interests of the State cannot be guarded by them with the watchfulness they deserve."[17]

Shahu does not stop here. He goes on citing the examples of his own State, stating how it has suffered owing to the long continued minority of its rulers in so many matters which proved to be detrimental 'to the rights and privileges, dignity and prestige of Kolhapur Raj'[18] Shahu had cited a few concrete instances. Some of the more important ones are briefly discussed below.

VI. Lowering of Salutes

The Ruler of Kolhapur was the direct descendant of the great Shivaji who had founded the Maratha Empire. The Empire was broken into fragments. The Ruler of these fragments, say those of Baroda and Gwalior, did possess territories far larger in extent and revenue much greater then Kolhapur. But they all held in reverence the Kolhapur Gadi of the Founder. On this background the British Government had bestowed an honour of 21gun Salute on the Chhatrapati. But during the minority period of Shivaji III the British Government lowered the Salutes at 19. Later on Shahu regained the honour of 21 gun Salute, as a mark of appreciation of his loyalty and devotion to the Crown. However, he could not forget 'the loss of his dynastic prestige' that had permanently suffered during the minority of one of his ancestors."[19]

VII. Nazarana-A Violation of Treaties

The issue of Nazarana has already been discussed in the beginning of this Chapter. Shahu in his letter has raised it, saying that on the occasion of his installation, the Government of Bombay had asserted its claim for Nazarana for the first time. Later, the Government did not insist upon it and eventually gave it up. However, referring to the issue of Nazarana, Lord Harris, the Governor of Bombay, had observed that the Government had waived its right to receive Nazarana from Kolhapur State. Recalling the incidence Shahu remarks that the Governor's statement was unhistorical as Kolhapur was at no time subordinate to any of the governments preceding the British Government. Shahu further maintains, "No Nazar was ever demanded from, nor was given by Kolhapur to any. There were two successions by adoption, immediately before that of the present Maharaja. Both his father and grand-father were adopted and their adoptions were recognized by the British Government. But on these occasions, no question about Nazar was raised. Therefore, the claim to receive Nazar is not only without precedent but the assertion of the same is in violation of the terms of the treaties."[20]

VIII. Seignorial Right of Kolhapur Violated

Kolhapur State had been exercising its seigniorial rights over its feudatories such as Kagal, Ichalkaraji, Vishalgad etc. By Article No. 8 of the Treaty of 1862, the British Government retained with itself some degree of supervision over these feudatories. The Article distinctly states that this supervision had not been intended in any way to infringe the seigniorial rights of the ruler, but merely to secure a good government. Under the seigniorial rights of the ruler, it was his power to sanction or withhold the adoptions of the feudatories. However, Shahu cites an example of one of his feudatories who had applied to the Kolhapur Darbar for adoption of a son. Shahu says, "Government, however, wrote to the Darbar that the orders of the Darbar require the approval and confirmation of Government i.e. the Darbar could not dispose of the matter independently of them, though sanctioning or withholding sanction to a proposed adoption clearly fell within the signorial rights of the Darbar. In the exercise of course of their supervisionary power, if any question goes before Government, they are certainly free to deal with it as they may think proper. But the right of the Darbar to decide such matters in the first instance cannot, the Darbar respectfully think, be questioned."[21]

Shahu concludes the discussion, saying that if the seigniorial rights of the Ruler are not to be infringed as specially mentioned in the Treaty, he should have unfettered discretion in their exercise.[22]

IX. The Kolhapur Currency Abolished

Kolhapur State had its own currency called the Punnalee Currency. The coins were struck in the mints as per the requirements of the State. After the death of Shahaji alias Buwasaheb in 1837, the British Government asked the Kolhapur Darbar not to revive the mints-c. 1840-41.

The old currency was in vogue till 1867-68, when it was ordered to be suppressed by the British Government. At that time, the Ruler of the State, Rajaram, was a minor.

While describing the step of the British Government as an act without sanction of any treaty, Shahu remarks, "In none of the treaties entered into by Kolhapur with the British Government is there any provision affecting the Darbar's right to coinage, apart from the question whether the measure was beneficial or otherwise to the State. The abolition of the mint or coinage during the minority of the ruler was an act without sanction under the terms of the treaties and it went to detract much from the prestige of the State and has also caused loss of the revenue, the Darbar having received no compensation."[23]

X. Means of Communication introduced without the consent

The means of Communication such as Post & Telegraphs and Telephones were no doubt useful and beneficial to both the administration of the State and its subjects. But they were established and introduced in the State when the ruler was a minor and the administration was in the hands of the British Political Superintendent, who did not require previous consent of the ruler. Kolhapur State

could have started its own Post Office system. But the State could not avail of that opportunity. Shahu writes, "But the right of the State to have its own Post Office was in this respect ignored by the then authorities to detriment of the State's status and pecuniary interests. It seems that in this respect Kolhapur was treated by Government as one of their own districts in spite of the fact that they had to obtain previous consent and then enter into agreement with other States when Post offices and Telegraph lines were proposed to be established & opened in the State territories. Some States like Indore & Gwalior were allowed to have their own Post offices while others like Baroda, in consideration of their right, were given compensation; it is learnt, in the shape of service stamps (Postal) free of cost. The restrictions regarding telephone communication within the State are also an encroachment on its sovereign rights."[24]

XI. Mines and Minerals

In 1902, the British Government framed some rules regarding the grant of mining leases and licence to explore prospects for minerals. Under these rules not only were Native States expected to inform the Government of all contemplated concessions in respect to minerals but any right, conferred on holders of prospecting and exploring licenses to obtain mining leases in the State, was made conditional on the sanction of Government of India.

Commenting on these rules, Shahu writes, "This is clearly in violation of the sovereign rights of the Darbar, especially as the rules do not specify the kind of capital contemplated there under, whether indigenous, local or foreign."[25]

II. Railway Jurisdiction

While Shahu was a minor ruler, the project of Kolhapur – Miraj Railway was undertaken by the British Government, for which an agreement was made with the Council of Administration presided by the Political Agent of Kolhapur in 1886. By the agreement Kolhapur ceded all jurisdiction short of sovereignty over lands occupied by the railway and it was binding upon not only the minor ruler but his heirs and successors also.

Shahu's stand on the above issue was that, "Such an agreement of a permanent nature ought to have received confirmation from the Ruler on his assumption of powers even though the act may derive justification from a general policy necessary to be followed in the interests of the travelling public."[26]

Other miscellaneous points raised by Shahu in this document are : 1) Abolition of the manufacture of Salt. 2) Prohibition of cultivation of the poppy and manufacture of opium and 3) Abolition of the export and import duties. All these measures of the British Government put the State at pecuniary loss. For example, under abolition of the export and import duties, the State had to sustain a loss of Rs. 25,000/- a year.[27]

This lengthy document was concluded with the following words "The Darbar will also, His Highness trusts, be forgiven for taking this opportunity of

referring to events that took place long ago and matters that have been decided years back. Darbar's only excuse in doing so is that this State has been peculiarly circumstanced owing to long minority administrations extending in all over more than half a century during which, as mentioned above, it has suffered pecuniarily as well as in the loss of territory and prestige."[28]

It should be noted here that in the first decate of the 20th century it was not an easy task for Shahu to criticise the policy of British Paramountcy with regard to Kolhapur State and expose its imperialistic designs. However, with progress of National Freedom Movement, especially the Home Rule Movement, the Government began to feel a sense of solitariness and isolation and hence, started wooing the India Princes, their long time 'Allies' in India. It was this political psychology of the British Government which necessitated the Viceroys of India to convene the annual conferences of the Princes and seek their advice in the affairs relating to the Native States and in the problems arising out of the Government's Reform Policy being implemented in British India.

In the following pages, we are going to examine Shahu's involvement in such conferences, especially his thoughts regarding the problems of the Native States and his contribution to the formation of the Council of the Princes.

Princes' Conference: October 1916

The Conference of Ruling Princes and Chiefs was convened in October 1916 at Delhi and the Viceroy Lord Chelmsford presided over its first session on the 30th instant. Ganga Singh of Bikaner, 'a forceful and energetic Prince' and 'the Principal spokesman and the greatest celebrity' of the Princes and Chiefs, had specially sent a telegram to Shahu requesting him to attend the conference.[29] Shahu later on is found thanking Ganga Singh for inducing him to attend the Conference for which he could 'never be too grateful' to him.'[30]

There were nine representatives of the Princes and Chiefs from the Bombay Presidency and Shahu was one of them. The Conference mainly discussed the issue of the 'Minorities' in the Native States and unanimously endorsed the recommendation of the 'Minorities Committee' headed by Rulers of Bikaner, Gwalior, Bhopal and three Political officers of Government of India.[31] Shahu seems to have actively participated in the deliberations of the Conference as he himself had later on informed his friend Sir Claude Hill that since the Chiefs' Conference he had become 'very bold' and that he had 'shaken off' his shyness.[32]

During his stay in Delhi, Shahu had come into contact with many Princes and Chiefs and shared an exchange of views and thoughts with them. On November 3, 1916, he along with his 7 'Brother Princes' from the Bombay Presidency sent a memorandum to the Viceroy, requesting him to connect them directly with the Government of India. The memorandum says, "The advantages of sharing the uniform policy with our Brother-Princes having direct relations with Your Excellency's Government are so evident that it would certainly be a privilege

and a direct benefit to us if our request is granted". The seven other Princes were from Cutch, Palanpur, Idar, Morvi, Gondal, Nawanagar and Rajpipla.[33]

While, Shahu was on his way to Kolhapur, he wrote from Agra to Mr. J.B.Wood, Secretary, Foreign and Political Department of Government of India, that the request of eight Bombay Princes was but in keeping with their oriental ideas and sentiments.[34] [November 5, 1916]

Princes' Conference: November 1917

The Viceroy had decided to hold annual conference of the Princes and its next session was due in November 1917. Before that he had prepared some rules to be introduced for regulating the procedure of debate in the Conference. He had sent the copy of those rules to Shahu. The Resident Col. Wodehouse, while forwarding the copy, specially mentions "His Excellency the Viceroy desires that opinions of some of the more important Chiefs should be invited". [July 11, 1917], The proposed rules were pertaining to the appointment of a Chairman, matters to be considered, duties of Chairman, resolutions and amendments etc.[35]

On the very next day, on July 12, 1917, Shahu sent his reply, suggesting some additions to the rules to make the following points clear:

"1) Who are eligible for membership or may be considered members of the Conference?

2) Whether Chiefs eligible for membership or who may be considered members of the Conference may, when absent, send in their written opinions on the questions in the agenda and be considered to have voted on those questions.

3) Whether Chiefs may send in before a time to be fixed for addition to the agenda paper any question or questions which they think important enough to be discussed at the Conference.

4) Nature of questions that may be discussed at the Conference.

5) Whether after a suitable period Government will inform the Conference their views or action if they propose to take any on the resolutions passed at the Conference – a) unanimously and b) by a majority.

6) Whether when the Conference sits members may with the permission of the Chairman hold for some time an informal discussion on points that may arise during the consideration of any question with a view to securing unanimity if possible."[36]

The above 6 points are indicative of the fact, how deeply Shahu had developed an interest in the problems of the Native States in India. Later on, the Resident conveyed to Shahu that the Government of India had greatly appreciated his helpful suggestions regarding the draft rules for the conduct of business of the Princes' Conference.[37]

The Conference was inaugurated by the Viceroy on November 5, 1917, at Delhi. The number of the members attending the Conference exceeded that of previous year. While welcoming the Princes and Chiefs, and expressing pleasure at the response of the members, the Viceroy said that the Rulers had realized the advantage of such Conference, not only as giving an opportunity for bringing their views before the Government of India but also as drawing them into touch with larger issues affecting the welfare of their States in particular and of India in general. However, he cautioned them against making hasty decision about Council of Princes in the following words:

"Some of you, I know, contemplate the early establishment of some constitutional assemblage of the nature of a 'Council of Princes with specified functions and well-defined powers.' That, Your Highnessess, is an ideal which you may well place before yourselves, but which must, I fear, wait for its realization until further experience indicates the lines on which these informal Conferences may most appropriately be developed in the joint interests of yourselves and of the Empire at large. In the speeches which I delivered at last Conference I made it clear that its function was to advise the Government of India on certain specific matters concerning yourselves, your States and your people, and I urged that you should give time for development and growth before giving to this assemblage a formal shape in which its functions and powers would be strictly defined."[38]

In the course of his address, the Viceroy made references to variety of subjects relating to the Native States, such as Imperial Service Troops, Recruitment of the Regular Army, Minority Administration Recognition of successions and Development of Agriculture and Horse-breeding operations in the Native States.[39]

It is really interesting to know that during the session of the Conference Shahu had intended to present to the assemblage of the Rulers his notes on three of the subjects incorporated in the Viceroy's address, namely Agriculture, Horse-breeding and the Recruitment of the Marathas to Army. Shahu's Notes included three more subjects : Home Rule, the Relations between the Native States and the Government of India and Tribunal. Thus Shahu had come to Delhi with full-preparation for participation in the business of the Conference. It is evident that he had read his Note on Agriculture on the last day of the Conference, i.e. November 8, 1917. It is not clear whether he could either read or circulate the othe notes amongst the members of the Conference. Out of these six Notes some important ones are recorded here.

Recruitment of Marathas in the Army

Shahu's third note, presented at the Conference of Princes, was on Recruitment of the Marathas in the British Army.[40] The World War was still going on, resulting into serious situation for the Allies in Europe and elsewhere. To Shahu it was the time for rapid action for immediate concentration of man-power in India. Abundant man-power was available in the Country. Shahu felt that the Government

should recognize and appreciate its value and encourage various races inhabiting the subcontinent to enroll themselves in British Indian army. Some of them, for example the Gaud, were not considered as fighting men. However, the Government had lately enrolled some 3000 Gauds in the army. Being intelligent, they were more quickly trained and they gave good account of themselves. Shahu opined that sometimes people's conclusions had been based on ill-digested facts and preconceived notions.

There were such preconceived notions about the Marathas also. Shahu explains, "It was thought that the Marathas being small in stature and thin in build would not be equal to the Sikhs and Punjabis. The big size has no doubt its advantages but the smaller size of the Marathas and the climatic conditions under which they are bred give them power of endurance which is of great value in time of stress through which the Indian Army had to go recently in the Mesopotamian campaign. It is this power of endurance which made it possible for the Maratha Army to overrun at one time the whole of India. I am happy to say that the Marathas have not yet lost their dash and capacity to stand at their post in time of difficulties. Those qualities are now recognized by British officers with unstinted admiration. I should like Government therefore to utilize this fine material to the utmost capacity."

But how could this be accomplished? Shahu wanted to solve this question more promptly and that too in a business like manner. The Government was anxious to enroll the Marathas, but the latter did not come forward in a big number. According to Shahu the reasons for their poor response, though unpalatable, were not difficult to understand. While giving free expression to his honest views, he put forth the following fact:

"If military men have no higher intelligence they have sufficient sense to understand the differential treatment they receive even in the theatre of war. This would be difficult to prove but not difficult to understand. I have learnt this from military men themselves and the fact must be taken as such and considered." Thus Shahu had boldly shed light on the step-motherly treatment the Maratha soldiers received at the hands of his British officers in the army. That had to be checked and redressed.

Secondly, Shahu suggested to the Government that considering attachment of the Marathas to land, the Government should give them land-grants to attract them to the Army. He cited a good example of Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior in this direction who had offered 25 Bighas of land to every recruit sent out on the War. Shahu points out that within three months, more than 1200 recruits have enlisted themselves as a result of this novel offer. In this respect he makes an additional suggestion to the Government that if they are not prepared to make land-gifts to the soldiers in India, they should give them land in East Africa, wrested from Germany. Shahu remarks, "Such a policy would be a fitting reward to the spirit of loyalty and bravery shown so well by the Indian soldiers. To English soldier lands are being offered in Africa on very favourable terms. Let the same policy be

extended to Indian soldiers in those parts of Africa which is not suited for European colonization."

In this context, Shahu emphasizes one more point that the Government should enroll the Maratha Commissioned Officers of 'good families' in the Maratha Regiments. He maintains that British officers do command respect, but that is out of fear and not due to traditional love. Shahu goes on elaborating his point:

"I may cite only one recent incident which took place in Mesopotamia. The time came when men were asked to eat horse-flesh. This they flatly refused. They said they would submit to this provided I ordered them to. I was asked by H. E. the Governor of Bombay, to use my influence. Though it was against our religion, I ordered the men to take horse-flesh and implicitly they obeyed the order. This incident throws a flood of light and gives ample food for reflection."

"As a token of earnestness in this respect I am even prepared to keep my one son at the disposal of Government to be utilized in a responsible position befitting the dignity of his House. I trust this offer will be taken in the spirit it is made."

It should be noted here that Shahu was not a lone national figure to support the Government in their war-efforts, especially in the recruitment of men in the British Army. Tilak, Gandhi and even Savarkar had appealed to the youths of the Country to join the army. According to Gandhiji the participation of the Indian people in the war-efforts to protect the British Empire was the most easy and simple way of achieving the Swarajya. [41]

Home Rule

Shahu's fourth Note is on 'Home Rule'. The Home Rule movement, started by Tilak and Dr. Annie Basant, was at its highest point. Meanwhile Montagu had declared the British Policy, with an aim of progressive realization of responsible government in India. Montagu himself was coming to India on his study tour and reaching Delhi on November 11, 1917. On this background Shahu had presented his Note on 'Home Rule' at the Princes' Conference. [42]

At the outset Shahu plainly states that the Princes of Native states have no right to express their opinion regarding the administrative matters in British India. He continues, "If, however I am asked to give my opinion as an outsider, so far as I may on so important a question as Home Rule, I have no hesitation in saying that India is not yet ready for that sort of administration. The masses are steeped in ignorance and superstitution. They are under the thumb of the priestly classes.....The rigidity of caste system and caste autonomy is an insuperable barrier and so long as this is not broken, there can be no harmonious working. The so-called representatives of the people would be representing only a very small minority of the educated classes who are hardly in touch with the masses. If reforms on the lines of Home Rule are introduced all power may go into the hands of those from whose selfish predominance the masses have suffered for ages. It is no wonder, therefore,

that the bulk of the people, at any rate such of them as have not enough education to understand the significance of the impending changes, should be alarmed at the contemplated transfer of power and responsibility to an oligarchy of a handful of agitators. The priestly classes have hitherto trodden the masses under their foot. I am, therefore, of opinion that all our energies should for the present be concentrated on educating the masses and then the question of introducing reforms on the lines of Home Rule may be taken up as one within the pale of practical politics."

Pointing out the apprehension of the Princes regarding the impending reforms in British India, Shahu says that they fear that such reforms on the lines of Home Rule in British India may affect their relations with the Paramount Power and create difficulty for them within and without their states. Describing their fear as only vague, he comforts the Princes that their rights and obligations are more or less given in their treaties and agreements with the British Government and that there is no likelihood of any change in their status being made.

And if at all the reforms in British India did affect the affairs of the States and created some problems in their relations with the Paramount Power, the Tribunal, as advocated by Shahu, was to be there to decide the issues impartially.

Indian States and the British Government

This is the fifth note of Shahu. [43] The subject was very important as well as sensitive. Only a fearless and courageous Prince could dare to comment on the relations between the Native States and the British Government and could point out flaws in those relations. Shahu had such fearlessness and courage.

In the beginning of his Note, Shahu says that though the present relations of the Indian States with the British Government are 'fairly good', however, they stand in need of being improved and bettered. He recalls that these relations were established when the Indian Empire was in the making and that they belonged to the period of consolidation of the Empire. He continues, "The times are changed. With changed times, the relations should be changed. In the beginning, all the changes were wrought on the line of consolidation. Interest of the individual State had necessarily to be overlooked. For mutual progress interest of either side requires to be weighed and adjudged. This means it is necessary to give a meaning to States. This imports also the meaning of partnership which in its turn demands confidence and feelings of harmony which is absent at present to a certain extent. Once considerate treatment is laid down as the line of conduct, the relationship between British Government and Indian States will be of 'Honorable Union'. It is this Honorable Union that is wanted for the mutual good and the moral and material development of India."

Shahu goes on to suggest the remedies as to how this 'Honorable Union' could be brought into existence. In the first place, he stresses that the powers of political officers, who are intermediaries between the State and the British Government, required to be defined in the interest of both. Because, ill-defined

Powers, he says, give unnecessary scope for interference to political officers and the States are not in position to appreciate their position in relation to the Paramount Power. Railways, Telegraphs, Arms, Post, Army etc. were the interests of the British Government. Shahu says that once such imperial interests are catalogued, the State interests should be defined and that once State interests are defined the Princes should be allowed to solve their problems of internal administration. He emphasizes the sense of freedom of action, saying that "Nothing is possible without freedom and progress to be real should be through blunders."

Further elaborating the Principle of freedom of action, Shahu says, "When the freedom of action is accepted as the corner stone of real progress, it is necessary that States should have freedom to approach the Viceroy in times of difficulty. The present policy of 'closed door' should be replaced by one of the sense of responsibility in rulers themselves."

The British Government had proclaimed the policy of non-interference in the Indian States. Shahu believed no bad results had come out of that policy. So he on his part appeals the Government, "To give is to get, is the highest truth of Indian Philosophy and that should be put in practice without hesitation and diffidence."

Shahu puts forward a suggestion that in case of difference of opinion between the political officers and a State Ruler the latter should have the privilege of approaching the Viceroy. He quite naturally raises a question, "Since the political officer is a friendly intermediary and is to have his own opinion, why not the friendly Ruler be given the right to represent his own stand point? Want of freedom in this respect is oppressive and causes unnecessary disappointment if not heart-burning. It also generates the sense of helplessness and humiliation and deprives one of the sense of hopefulness, which alone is capable of keeping up the buoyancy of spirit."

The Foreign Secretary to the Government of India was a solitary officer in charge the portfolio of Indian States. Shahu argues that at certain stages 'one man rule' as it were, is good; but with higher development such a rule develops into arbitrariness which does not command respect. Commenting on the intricacy of the problems of the States, Shahu says that the States interests are sufficiently large to require careful attention on the part of Government and that questions arising in them are of varying nature, requiring great ingenuity and talent on the part of deciding officers. He further argues that such questions are required to be adjudicated on the basis not only of equity but of practicability; and that they are required to be decided suiting the Honorable Union between the State and the Government.

While concluding the Note, Shahu makes a very important suggestion: "In order to assist the Viceroy who is the final arbiter of our destinies, I propose that the Foreign Secretary should be associated by Indian Members with the Englishman of administrative experience from England and two as is being done now in the Executive Council. The Indian member should be nominated by the Princes and also

paid by them. This provision is necessary to create confidence in the Princes that their point of view will be properly studied and represented before the Viceroy."

"Before the Board the Indian State concerned should be allowed to represent their case. The privilege is not denied even to a criminal. The Viceroy should have the benefit of the joint opinion of the Board." The above note is indicative of Shahu's keen interest in the subject of states' relations with the Paramount Power.

A Tribunal on the Lines of the Hague Tribunal

This is the sixth and final Note, Shahu had prepared at the time of the Princes Conference in 1917. Though it is not clear whether he had submitted this Note at the Conference or not, it was circulated in a leaflet form to some important Princes in Delhi who had come to attend the conference. This we come to know from a letter of R. Rajadaman Singh, the Maharaja of Nabha, dated November 12, 1917.[44] Again, on his return from Delhi, on December 10, 1917, Shahu had sent the above Note in a form of 'strictly Confidential' letter to all Ruling Princes and Chiefs of India.[45]

At the outset Shahu elucidates the objects and scope of the Tribunal. It was meant for hearing and disposing of political questions in which Princes and Chiefs might differ from their Residents or Political Agents. The questions might also be between the Princes and the British Government or amongst the Princes or between them and their feudatories, or they might concern with their administrative and other acts.

Shahu then makes it clear that his following remarks in his Note are not applicable to all or even many of the Political officers who take the keenest interest in the welfare of the Princes and their States. Nor he was complaining against the Government. He confesses that it is out of the earnest desire of the Government to do the Princes good, the Princes' Conference has been brought into existence. His only object of putting forward his idea of Tribunal was to promote friendliest of relations between the Princes and Government by removing all causes of friction.

Shahu then proceeds to paint an unpleasant but a factual picture of the Princes' position and their handicaps in their relations with the Paramount Power. He describes: "The Princes have no access to the reports made by Political Officers and cannot rebut or contradict them. As against the Princess, the Resident or the Political Agent is considered the trusted officer of the Government. Is not the Chief a trusted friend of Government? Even disloyal men like Tilak and other get a hearing. The confidential reports of high Police and Revenue officers like Commissioners and other, who are superior in rank to most political officers, are not considered enough to condemn them. They are trusted officers of Government; yet their word is not taken as Gospel truth even as against men notoriously hostile to Government, while as against the Chief the word of the Political officer is supreme.

If the latter has reason to be displeased with the Chief on any account it is but natural that it should have effect in the official matters. Questions disposed of years back are allowed to be raked up. Rights, privileges and usages of long standing are apt to be questioned. Attempt is made even to belittle and show in a different light the past good work of the Chiefs. The interference sometimes extends to the education of sons of Princes and also to matters of smaller importance. Certainly if the Princes are considered fit to administer their States, they can well be trusted to look after their own sons' education. Sometimes European friends are not allowed to be approached or consulted privately, formally or informally. I consider this very unpleasant of the Chiefs. The result of all this is that much bad blood is stirred up. My own personal experience in such matters is very bitter. And instances both from my State and other States also could, I am sure, be cited in support of this."

Shahu's passing reference to his own personal experience was not far from truth. At this time his relations with the Resident Col. Wodehouse had reached to its lowest ebbs on account of the recruitment riots in Kolhapur. The Resident had taken an antagonist stand to the cxtent of saying, "I am no longer your friend. I am a representative of the British Government. I have done every thing for you; but you did not behave properly." In consequence, he had sent one sided reports to the Governor who was displeased with Shahu. In May, 1917 Shahu writes to his Tutor and Guide Sir Fraser that Kolhapur is in a worst state than what it was in Col. Wray's time. [46] One must take into account Shahu's position in 1917 while reading his above remarks about the Princes' position in general.

Regarding the constitution of the Tribunal, Shahu says that personally he should prefer a purely European Tribunal. However, he would have no objection if Indians of administrative experience and legal talents such as Sir M.B. Chaubal and Sir S.P. Sinha were selected also to sit on it. Moreover, he proposes that the Princes like Maharajas of Baroda, Gwalior, Indore, Bikaner, Alwar, Cutch etc. may be appointed as members of the Tribunal.

In the end of the Note Shahu hoped that by establishment of such Tribunal the Government also would be greatly assisted. He maintained that a decision, given after giving full hearing to all parties concerned in an open court, having on the bench men of acknowledged merit free from bias, was bound to be accepted by all.

He further maintained that in such cases if the Government wanted to deprive a Ruler of his Power, their action would not be criticized as arbitrary or highhanded. This would not only satisfy the Princes but it would have direct salutary effect on the working of the Political officers. Shahu concludes, "The sense that questions, decided by them will be gone into thoroughly by unbiased judges, will naturally make them more careful and cautious in deciding political matters and making official reports on political questions. This is my sole object in bringing this proposal. Surely, if Princes and Chiefs are considered the pillars of the Indian

Empire they deserve to be treated with consideration as great as, if not greater than, that shown to persons who are avowedly antagonistic to Government."

Shahu's idea of Tribunal was greatly appreciated by the Ruling Princes of India. For instance, in his aforesaid letter, the Maharaja of Nabha says, "I fully agree with your Highness that at present the Ruling Princes are in position of great disadvantage as they are not allowed to see the reports made by the Political officers against them and the Local Governments and the Government of India come to conclusion on practically one sided version of such officers. Nobody can, with any show of reason; urge that such a treatment of the Ruling Princes is fair" [47]

It should be specially noted here that Shahu was the first Indian Ruler who had mooted the idea of a Tribunal for adjudicating the political and administrative questions between the Princes and the Government or amongst the Princes themselves.

Meeting with Montagu : February 1919

During the Princes' Conference, held in November 1917, the Maharaja of Bikaner, speaking on behalf of the Ruling Princes and Chiefs, had expressed hope that before the British Government arrived at any decision regarding the political reforms in British India, the Princes should also be consulted and that for safeguarding the interests of the Sates, a constitutional Chamber of the Princes should be established at an early date. However, while deprecating the idea of immediately establishing the Chambers, with a fixed constitution and strictly defined powers, the Viceroy had suggested that it might be possible to arrange a preliminary and quite informal discussion on the subject towards the close of Mr. Montagu's stay in India. Now both the Viceroy and the Secretary of Sate for India decided to call a meeting of notable Princes for informal consultation in Delhi the 4th and 5th February, 1918. Mr. Wood, the Secretary to the Foreign and Political Department, of Government of India, sent a letter, dated December 10, 1917, to Shahu, inviting him to attend the Conference and submit his views 'on the question of measures which you consider to be necessary to safeguard your interests in the future constitution of the Indian Empire.' [48]

Shahu, greatly interested in such Government posture, seemed to have prepared an appeal to the Princes and Chiefs of India, under the title of 'Necessity of the interview of representative Indian Princes with the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu.' In it, Shahu appealed to the Princes not miss the heavenly opportunity :

"We should not fail to avail ourselves of this opportunity of calling on the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu and having a free talk with him regarding general questions involving interests of native states. I think an interview of representative rulers with the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State on the present occasion is most essential. We should be failing in our duty to posterity if we let go this opportunity which by Heaven's grace has been afforded to us after so many years. Perhaps for

many a year more it may not come again and that is why I am so particular and persistent about my proposal."[49]

The meeting with Mr. Montagu was held on February 4 and 5. It was attended by a host of representative Princes, including the Maharajas of Gwalior, Jaipur, Jodhpur and Kolhapur, the Maharao of Cutch and the Begum of Bhopal. The report of the 'Committee of four', which has already been referred to in chapter No. 1, was placed at meeting and discussed. The Princes were assured that no constitutional change, which would impair their rights and privileges, would be introduced in the impending reforms.[50]

Both the Secretary of State and the Viceroy accepted the suggestions regarding the 'Chamber of Princes' and their Advisory Committee and the Tribunal on the lines of Hague Tribunal.[51] The acceptance of Tribunal in principle was a great victory of Shahu, as he was advocating its idea whole heartedly for a long time.

Championing the Cause of Smaller States

Shahu was a champion of smaller States and their rights and prestige. In the recent past, the notable Princes in their meeting held at Patiala, had decided that only those Princes, who had unrestricted civil and criminal jurisdiction over their subjects and the power to make their own laws, should be the members of the Chamber of Princes and that the smaller States should be excluded from it.Opposing the above Patiala Resolution on February 5, Shahu upheld the rights of the smaller States at the above mentioned meeting.[52] However, he was not advocating 'one-vote-a-man' system but urging that some sort of representation ought to be given to them by way of groups.[53]

On February 10, 1918, Shahu returned from Delhi to Kolhapur. On the 18th instant, he is found writing to his brother, Bapusaheb Ghatge, who was probably in Bombay, that the King Emperor has decided to call the War Cabinet and Conference of the Empire including the Dominion and India and that he would himself like to join those bodies, if they would like to select some Indian Prince for that purpose.[54] This shows how he was keenly interested in playing a role of leader of the Ruling Princes at the national level.

On February 19, 1918, Shahu wrote to Mr. Montagu, thanking him for his keen interest in the affairs of Indian States. Along with his letter, he sent the copies of his Notes on the proposed Chamber of Princes and Tribunal. He also incorporated his strong opinions in the letter, saying that all the Princes and Chiefs should have the representation on the Chamber and that the Secretary to the Chamber should be elected and not selected one.[55]

Bombay War Conference

On 19th of June, 1917, the Governor of Bombay, Lord Willingdon had convened the War Conference at Bombay. All the Princes, Chiefs, Sardars and dignitaries from the Bombay Presidency were invited for the Conference. Shahu, a leading figure amongst them, made a forceful speech and appealed the Government

to open a military college in the Presidency on the pattern of the Sandhurst college in England and also give commission to native officers in the army who had made their mark on the battle-field.

Some lines from his encouraging and inspiring speech are worth quoting here : "Let us raise the biggest and best army that India has ever known. Let it be composed of all castes and creeds..... Let us all prove that our deeds are equal to, nay, in advance of our words. It is our duty at this juncture to help Govt. heart and soul in collecting and organizing manpower and in developing and economizing our material resources. It is not a time to spend our money over palaces and theatres and I may even say over buildings and roads but every pie that can be spared must be devoted to war."

"Let us not allow, therefore, our attention to be diverted by anything from the main purpose, viz to win the war, and I would seize this opportunity of appealing with all the earnestness I can command to the fighting races of India and indeed to all races in India. They should remember that on them mainly depends the future of this country. It is for them to uphold her past military traditions and glory and preserve her untarnished honour by deeds of valour and I feel confident they will not fail to do their part. I am equally confident that we are all agreed on one point that we must win the war and for that purpose every one of us is ready to make any sacrifices."

At the end of his speech, Shahu moved a resolution, conveying an expression of loyalty and dutiful response from the Presidency of Bombay to the King-Emperor and an assurance of the determination of Presidency to continue to do her duty to her utmost capacity in the great crisis through which the Empire was passing.[56]

A Letter to Mr. Montagu

Meanwhile, the British Government had published Montagu's Report on the Constitutional Reforms in India. Shahu read the Report and on August 17, he wrote a detailed letter to Mr. Montagu, appreciating reforms recommended and safeguards provided in the Report. According to him, the reforms were conceived in the noble spirit with due regard to the peculiar conditions of Indian society.[57] In the context of the Ruling Princes, Shahu observed, "As far as the Indian Princes are concerned I think you have made provision to give them nearly all that they asked for at Delhi. All the points in our representation have received careful consideration at your hands. I have no doubt that it will strengthen the ties between the Princes and the British Govt. in a manner that will call out the best in both for mutual welfare, and help against the common danger."[58]

However, Shahu pointed out that it was not clear what States would be included in the proposed Council of the Princes and where the line of demarcation would be drawn to exclude minor States and whether any arrangement was in contemplation to give them representation in the Council, along with the bigger

States. He appealed Mr. Montagu that the interest of the smaller States which numbered about 600 out of a total of nearly 700 should be safeguarded by giving them a voice in the Council. [59]

With regard to the Presidentship of the Council, Shahu was of the view that the Viceroy need not be put to an embarrassing position by making him also the President of the Council of Princes. The Viceroy would have to associate himself with the deliberations at the Council and at the same time, he would have to give his decision in his capacity of Viceroy. [60]

It should be recalled that Shahu in his Note on the Relations between the States and the Government, had urged that the powers of the British political officers, posted in the States, should be defined to avoid their unnecessary interference in the State affairs. However, in the Montagu's Report, Shahu discovered that the actual functions of the political officers and their sphere of interference had not been made explicit. [61]

Shahu's idea of Tribunal was accepted by Mr. Montagu in form of Commission. But the appointment of such a commission was left solely to the discretion of the Viceroy. Shahu felt that this discretion might not be used in the best interest of the Princes concerned, as the angles of view differed and what might appear less important to one might be of paramount importance to another from his point of view. Hence Shahu says, "All we say is that we must have a right of getting a commission. The choice must be with the party that considers himself aggrieved. For it is the aggrieved party who would always like such relief and it is but fair that the party should have a right to demand a commission i.e.an independent Tribunal" [62]

The Princes' Conference: Jan. 1919

The Government of India had fixed the 20th January, 1919 as the date of holding the Princes' Conference at Delhi. Shahu had been preparing for it since November, 1918. On the 26th instant he sent a letter to the Rulers of 10 major States, including Baroda, Jamnagar, Alwar, Patiala, Dewas, Nabha, Mysore, Travancore, Gwalior and Indore. He requested the Maharajas of the said States to send him the copies of their notes beforehand in order to know what they had to say about all the items on the agenda. [63]

Before he left Kolhapur for Delhi, he informed the Resident Col. Wodehouse that he had been fighting for the rights of the smaller States to have representation in the Conference and the Council. He stated that his attempts had been appreciated by those States.[64] (January 11, 1919) He was accompanied by his Diwan Raghunathrao Sabnis, his A.D.C. Desai, his Chief Secretary Gupta and Adv. Abhyankar from Sangli as his Private Secretary. He had prepared his Notes on 'the Treaty and other points' and stated to have spent Six weeks over them. Soon after his arrival at Delhi, he wrote to one Mr. Hollund to read his notes as he had without any cause injured his eye-sight and ear and lost his teeth in the previous week. The doctors said it was the nervous result of his son's death. [65] (January 16, 1919)

Shahu, though suffering from serious ailments, took active part in the business of the Conference. He insisted on his demand for the inclusion of Chiefs of small States in the Council, for which he was acclaimed and appreciated by the Chiefs and feudatories of India. His Tutor Sir Fraser also praised his speeches at the Conference and congratulated him for this achievements. [66]

Fighting for S.M.C. Chiefs

Shahu had since 1916 championed the cause of his minor brother – Chiefs at the Conferences held at Delhi. After the previous conference January 1919, the Southern Maratha Country Chiefs such as Sangli, Miraj, Mudhal, JamKhandi, Ramdurg, Nargunda the Satara Chiefs had approached Shahu and requested him to hold a meeting of the Chiefs to discuss the following two points:

I. The inclusion of all minor Chiefs in the Council of Princes, and

II. The creation of an independent Tribunal to settle matters of dispute between them or between them and Government.

The Chiefs had also decided upon meeting together under leadership of Shahu who promised them to secure the services of a British officer to help them in their deliberations and submit their proposal to the Government. In his letter, dated March 15, 1919, to the Resident of Kolhapur, Shahu says "I am not fighting for myself, but I am fighting for all my brother-Chiefs especially because Satara and S.M.C. Chiefs are geographically isolated from all the Indian States." [67]

On March 25, 1919, Shahu wrote a detailed letter to the new Resident Col. Harold, regarding his efforts for the rights of small Chiefs at the last conference held in Delhi. He informed Col. Harold that he gave dissenting note to the statement of the Maharajas of Patiala and Alwar that there should be no small Chiefs in the Conference of Princes. He further said that he had taken up the cause of small Chiefs from the beginning of the Conference and that even the Viceroy also had the same view. He writes "Maharajas of Patiala and Alwar canvas among the Princes and try to make our movement a failure. Some of the smaller Chiefs in the Bombay Presidency want me to take a lead as Alwar and Patiala are leading the Princes.Of course, I have told them unless I consult the Government, I cannot do anything... I am going to take the permission of Govt. and lay before the Govt. their views as Alwar and Patiala do" [68]

On May 20, the Resident informed Shahu that the British Government had no objection to the proposed Conference of S.M.C. Chiefs and Satara Chiefs under his auspices. [69]

Accordingly, Shahu convened a conference of the S.M.C. Chiefs and Satara Chiefs at Kolhapur on August 22, 1919. Most of the Chiefs attended it and the few like Akolkot, Savanur and Phaltan, who could not attend it, sent their messages, agreeing with the objects of the Conference. It was a unique event in the annals of the Bombay Presidency that the Chiefs of all castes and creeds had united together for a common object under their natural leader, Shahu Chhatraptri

Maharaja. He addressed the assembled Chiefs that all the Indian Rajas should be included in the Council of Princes. He further argued that the word 'Chief' did not sound well in his ears as it indicated tribal leadership, which was not proper designation for the Indian Rulers who were in a slightly varying degree the kings of their own people. [70]

Draft Constitution of the Chamber of Princes

By October 1919, Shahu prepared a Draft constitution of the Chamber of Princes and sent its copies to all the Rulers of the Indian States, stating that he had been advocating that all Indian States should have a representation whether individually or by groups. His intention was to facilitate the discussion on the subject at the coming Princes Conference in November 1919. [71]

The Draft constitution of the Chamber of Princes was the lengthy but distinctive document which provided detailed information about the States, viz. their area, population, income, salutes of guns and also indicated the number of votes proposed to each State or the group of States. The Draft constitution had been divided into two parts. The first part contained the provisions of the Constitution and the second part included Memorandums and Notes on the provisions made in the Constitution. It contained four Appendices regarding the varied status of the States. The first part of the Draft Constitution opened with the Preamble and followed by the provisions regarding the Chamber's Designation, Functions, Time of Meeting, President, Executive Committee, Hon. Secretary, Agenda of Business, Veto, Rules of Business, Special Meeting, Membership and Vote, Election Rules, Conduct of Business and Language.[72]

That year's Princes Conference was held in the first week of November 1919 at Delhi. Shahu attended it. The Conference was inaugurated by the Viceroy Lord Chelmsford. On the 4th November, while reporting an account of the Conference to the Governor of Bombay, Sir George Lloyd, Shahu said that the most of the views advocated by him from the beginning regarding the composition of the Chamber had the Viceroy's support. It seems that Shahu had a meeting with the Viceroy and discussed his 'Draft Constitution' with him as he writes, "I am delighted to find that his Excellency the Viceroy has agreed with me in the main." [73] Shahu had also discussed the Draft constitution with important Rulers like the Maharaja of Nabha and most of them appreciated his mission of protecting the interests of the smaller States. [74]

Establishment of the Chamber of Princes

Meanwhile the king Emperor, by the Royal Proclamation, announced the establishment of the Chamber of Princes which was to be inaugurated at the hands of the Prince of Wales in the autumn of the year 1920. On January 15, 1920, Shahu addressed a long letter to Sir John Wood, the Political Secretary to the Government of India, expressing great pleasure at the Royal Proclamation and hoping that the constitution of the Chamber should be made known to the Princes

before it was called into existence. For ensuring the hearty co-operation of the Princes in the working of the Chamber, Shahu makes the following specific suggestions to the Government –

1. The debate in the Chamber should be conducted not under the Presidency of the Viceroy but that of some Ruling Prince, as it would promote confidence and freedom of expression amongst the Princes.
2. The proceeding of the Chamber should be conducted in a language (e.g. Hindustani) which may give facilities to all the Princes to carry on discussion with ability, knowledge and thorough grasp.
3. The Princes should be allowed to take their advisers or ministers to the informal conferences of the Chamber.
4. When a State makes a request for referring its dispute to arbitration, such request should invariably be granted. This would doubtlessly add to high reputation of the Government. [75]

Sir Wood placed Shahu's letter before the Committee of Princes, meant for considering such matters. The committee rejected the first three suggestions and as regards the forth one, Shahu was informed that the Committee had framed a formula which would serve the purpose of arbitration. [76]

The king Emperor, by his second Royal Proclamation, dated August 18, 1920, announced that he would send, in stead of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cannaught to inaugurate the Chamber of Princes and to convey to the Princes and people of India his messages. Accordingly, on the 22nd of November, the Viceroy Lord Chelmsford sent the invitations to the Princes to attend the ceremony of inauguration of the Chamber of Princes to be held at the Diwan-i-Am Delhi, on the 8th February 1921. [77]

The Chamber of Princes was inaugurated at the hands of the Duke of Cannaught in a glittering ceremony. The Duke carried the message of the King Emperor George V, on whose behalf the former declared, "The King's desire is that every breath of suspicion or misunderstanding should be dissipated" and with that object in mind he "now invites your Highnesses, in the fullness of his confidence to take a larger role in the political development of your Motherland." Referring to his grandmother Victoria's pledge to maintain unimpaired the privileges, rights and dignities of the Princes, the King Emperor promised, "The Princess may rest assured that this pledge remains inviolate and inviolable" [78]

The Chamber of Princes had 120 members in all. 12 members out of them represented the 127 States and the remaining 108 members had their seats in their own rights. More than three hundreds States were not given the representation at all. Generally, the Chamber was to meet once a year and was to be presided over by the Viceroy of India. It was to elect its own Chancellor who was to preside over its meetings in the absence of the Viceroy. The Chamber had a Standing Committee and the Chancellor was its President. The Committee was to meet twice or thrice a

year at Delhi and to discuss the important issues regarding the States. The Committee was required to submit a yearly report to the Chamber. [79]

The Chamber of Princes was not an executive but a deliberative and advisory body. Its existence did not affect the individual relations between the Indian State and the British Government. However, it had twofold importance. Firstly, it recognized the right of the Princes to deliberate over the matters affecting their States amongst themselves. Secondly, it offered the Princes the right to be consulted in the matter of all India policy. By establishment of the Chamber, the British abandoned their much cherished 'Policy of Isolation' and at the same time it helped the States recover their sovereignty to some extent. The Princes were emboldened to resist further encroachments on the authority of the States. They also recovered some of the lost ground in political as well as economic spheres. [80]

Shahu's request regarding the SMC Chiefs was not granted. Only Kolhapur ,Sangli and Mudhol got the representation. A day before the opening of the Chamber, Shahu wrote to the Secretary of the Foreign and Political Department of India that he wanted to move resolution in the Chamber regarding the SMC Chiefs. However, his request was not granted by the Government. He was informed that the Viceroy had already selected the Princes after careful examination of their status and power and that the question of adding individual Rulers was not now open for discussion in the chamber of Princes as it was not a general question. [81] Thus Shahu's endeavour to get representation for SMC chiefs and Satara Chiefs met with a failure. But, he had kept the issue alive as we find him writing to the Governor of Bombay to use his good offices in the matter. [82]

'Going Under the Government of India'

At the end of his reign, Shahu was found pursuing one more objective i.e. 'going under the Government of India.' Ordinarily, the Indian States were placed under the control of the Provincial Government. But the States could opt for the control of the Government of India if they desired so. The States under the control of the Government of India were naturally considered as superior in status to those under the control of the Provincial Government. Shahu and his brother Princes, especially the SMC Chiefs, wanted to go under the direct control of the Government of India. Shahu knew that he, being under peculiar circumstances, had to fight against the Brahmins, the articulate community of the Presidency. For that his being under the control of the Presidency was an advantageous factor. But going under the Government of India had its own benefits also

In this context, Shahu in his long letter, dated February 22, 1921, to Mr. Montgomerie, the Political secretary to the Government of Bombay, says, "at one time when Baroda was under Bombay, the chair of Kolhapur in Darbars was above Baroda, as the latter was the servant of the Peshwas, Ministers of the Great Shivaji's successors; but when Baroda went under Government of India his status was altered and there is now no comparison between my position and his. For all

these reasons I had to sacrifice my personal interest in being under Bombay and I had to join other Princes who wish to go under Government of India. Because we have been given to understand that all Princes under one Government would be more happy and contented as the same policy would be given to all, the same treatment would be given to all and the same laws and regulations would bind them all and thus they would be more useful at the time of the mutiny or even at the time of the recent World War; almost all Princes in U.P. Bengal and Punjab, having gone under Government of India, they tell us that thereby their status is improved, and so they look down upon us. This touches our sentiment side."[83]

However, though the policy of the Government of India was favourable for bringing such States under their control, Shahu could not achieve his objective of going under their direct control. Perhaps, the Governor of Bombay might have proved to be an obstacle in his way.

Thus, with growth of Nationalism and national freedom movement in India, the British Government was becoming more and more conscious of their growing feeling of solitariness and isolation. So, they had begun a fresh move of friendship with the Indian States. This political psychology of the Government necessitated the Viceroys to conven periodical Conferences of the Indian. Princes and later to establish the Chamber of Princes, for seeking their advice in the political affairs of India. The Government seemed to have acknowledged the fact that it was the Princes only upon whom they could rely safely as the bastions of the Paramount Power in India.

Shahu was deeply interested in the Native States – British Relations and hence he took very active part in the Princes' Conferences. He not only attended their sessions but also presented his studied notes on the subjects ranging from Agriculture to Tribunal. At the National level, he came forth as a champion of the cause of smaller States to whom the bigger states regarded and treated as 'untouchables'. [The word, Shahu had himself used in his 'Note of dissent on the proposal at the Conference of Princes][84] He confronted the Princes like Patiala and Alwar who wanted to establish their monopoly at the Conferences. Shahu wanted smaller Chiefs and feudatories to be represented at the Conferences and later at the Chamber of Princes. He was so much interested in the subject that he had prepared a Draft Constitution of the Chamber and sent its copies to the Government and all the Princes in India. The Government seemed to have accepted most of the points of his Draft constitution. Though Shahu could not succeed in his endeavour of gaining representation for the smaller States at the Chamber, he continued his mission till the end. Thus, again he is found fighting here against injustice done to the weaker section of the Society of the Princes !

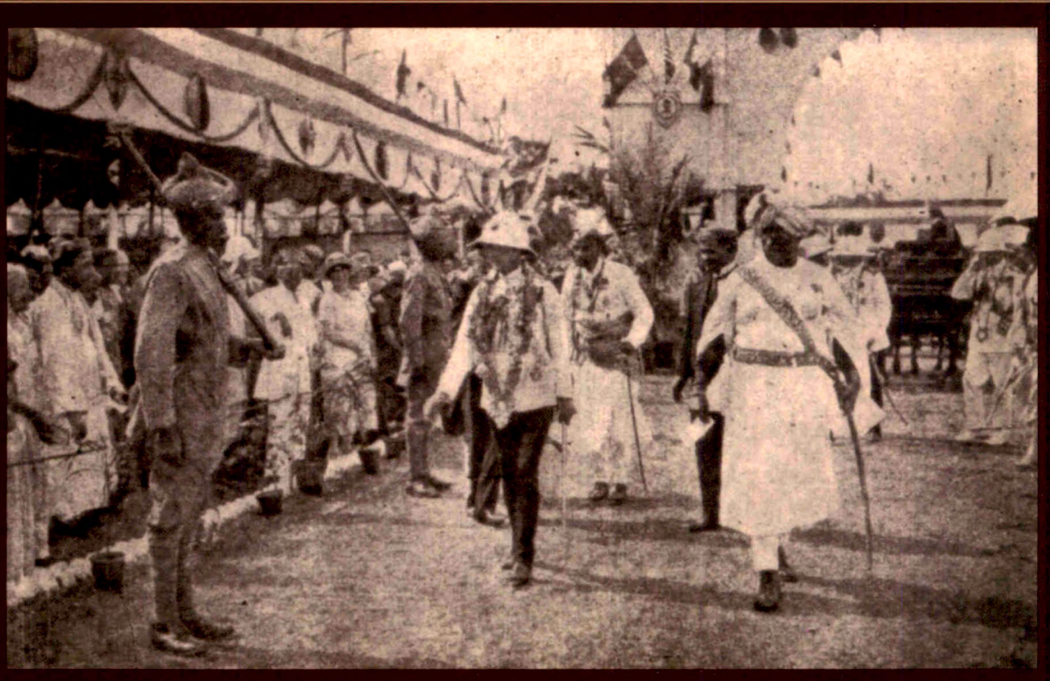
References and Footnote

1. RSCP, Vol. I, Letter No. 43, pp. 71-72
2. Ibid, pp. 71-72
3. Ibid, pp. 71-72
4. Ibid, Letter No. 53, p. 100
5. BPIS, p. 53
6. Shahu Papers, Unpublished Document No. R 7494
7. Ibid, p. 2
8. Ibid, Appendix – A, p. 1
9. Shahu Papers, Unpublished Document No. R 7494, p. 3
10. Ibid, p. 3
11. Ibid, p. 4
12. Ibid, pp. 4-5
13. Ibid, p. 5
14. Ibid, p. 5
15. Ibid, p. 5
16. Ibid, pp. 5-7
17. Ibid, p. 3
18. Ibid, p. 4
19. Ibid, p. 4
20. Ibid, p. 7
21. Ibid, p. 17
22. Ibid, p. 17
23. Ibid, p. 18
24. Ibid, pp. 18-19
25. Ibid, pp. 21-22
26. Ibid, p. 22
27. Ibid, pp. 19-20
28. Ibid, p. 23
29. BPIS, pp. 47-50
30. RSCP, Vol. VII, Letter No. 189, p. 238
31. BPIS, pp. 48-50
32. RSCP, Vol. VII, Letter No. 206, pp. 265-266
33. Ibid, Letter No. 175, p. 219
34. Ibid, Letter No. 177, p. 221
35. Ibid, Letter No. 262, pp. 333 -33
36. Ibid, Letter No. 271, p. 348
37. Ibid, Letter No. 319, p. 415
38. Ibid, Letter No. 340, p. 448

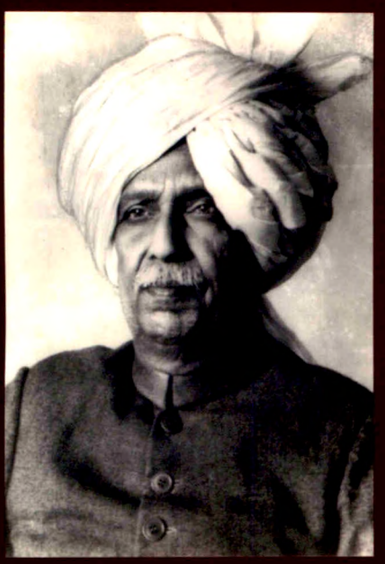
39. Ibid, Letter No. 340, pp. 449-453
40. Ibid, Letter No. 349, pp. 468-470
41. RSC, p. 290
42. RSCP, Vol. VII, Letter No. 350, pp. 471 - 472
43. Ibid, Letter No. 351, pp. 473-475
44. Shahu Papers, Unpublished, Letter No. R – 6637-38
45. RSCP, Vol. VII, Letter No. 373, pp. 503-504
46. SCRR, pp. 274-275
47. Shahu Papers, Unpublished, Letter No. R – 6637 - 38
48. RSCP, Vol. VII, Letter No. 372, pp. 501-502
49. Ibid, Letter No. 373, p. 505
50. BPIS, pp. 53-54
51. SCRR, p. 306
52. Ibid, p. 306
53. Shahu Papers, Unpublished, Letter No. R – 5766 - 67
54. Ibid, Letter No. R - 7139
55. RSCP, Vol. VIII, Letter No. 23, p. 36
56. Ibid, Letter No. 80, pp. 129-130
57. Ibid, Letter No. 121, pp. 195-202
58. Ibid, Letter No. 121, p. 196
59. Ibid, p. 194
60. Ibid, p. 197
61. Ibid, p. 197
62. Ibid, pp. 197-198
63. Ibid, Letter No. 174, p. 289
64. Ibid, Letter No. 186, p. 317
65. Ibid, Letter No. 187, p. 319
66. SCRR, pp. 377-378
67. RSCP, Vol. VIII, Letter No. 224, pp. 381-382
68. Ibid, Letter No. 234, pp. 395-396
69. Ibid, Letter No. 269, p. 559
70. Ibid, Letter No. 330, p. 560
71. Ibid, Letter No. 345, p. 583
72. Ibid, Letter No. 361, pp. 603-621
73. Ibid, Letter No. 347, p. 585
74. RSC, p. 405
75. RSCP, Vol. IX, Letter No. 2, pp. 3-5
76. Ibid, Letter No. 8, pp. 13-14
77. Ibid, Letter No. 146, p. 268
78. PIEE, p. 42
79. CHI, Vol. VI, pp. 902-903

80. SFF, Vol. XI, p. 805
81. RSCP, Vol. IX, Letter No. 160, 161, pp. 294, 296
82. Ibid, Letter No. 169, 170, 171, 172, pp. 308-312
83. Ibid, Letter No. 162, pp. 297-298
84. Shahu Papers, Unpublished, Letter No. R – 5766-67

Shahu,Prince of Wales, Poona, 1921



The Prince Wearing a Garland of Gold Walking Round The Enclosure.



Bhaskarrao Jadhav

Shripatrao Shinde

Annasaheb Latthe

Baburao Yadav

Chapter VII
Social Reform Movements

Shahu was a great champion of social rights of the downtrodden society. During his reign of 28 years, he extended his support to many social institutions and social workers all over Maharashtra. He also patronized social reform movements in his State, especially those of the Arya Samaj and Satyashodhak Samaj. In fact, the Arya Samaj was the first to attract his attention.

Arya Samaj

Shahu first came into contact with the Arya Samaj in 1892, when he was only eighteen years old and was on a study-tour in North India. When he, along with his Guardian and Teacher Sir Fraser, came to Mathura, he was honoured and presented with an address by local Arya Samajists. [1] He was however, first introduced to the philosophy and work of the Arya Samaj by Sir Pratapsingh, the Prince of Idar when both of them were on their voyage to England in 1902 for attending the coronation ceremony of King Edward VII. [2] Sir Pratapsingh Maharaja was an Arya Samajist and in his meetings with Shahu, he elucidated the importance of work of the Arya Samaj and its principles of religious and social equality and freedom. Later on, Pandit Atmaram, a spokesman of Arya Samaj from Baroda had many meetings with Shahu in, Kolhapur. It was because of these meetings and the interactions\discourses between them that Shahu was attracted towards the Samaj. Eventually, in course of time he became an Arya Samajist. [3]

Maharshi Swami Dayanand Saraswati founded the Arya Samaj in 1875. It recognized the Vedas as the only authoritative texts of the Hindu religion. It ardently championed the Vedic philosophy and culture. Even then, the Maharashtrian Brahmins, especially the Poona Brahmins, who used to boast of their Vedic origin, were opposed to the Swamiji and his philosophy as the Arya Samaj did not recognize the monopoly of the Brahmins over the Vedas. The Samaj had declared that every one, including the women and Shudras, had the right to study the Vedas. It had also condemned the caste discrimination and untouchability based on birth. Moreover, the Samajists were in favour of women's education and widow remarriage. Though such progressive principles and views were appreciated by the reformists like Jotirao Phule and Justice M.G. Ranade, the orthodox Poona Brahmins could not tolerate them. They even tried to ridicule Swamiji when he visited Poona. [4]

By the time Shahu was attracted towards the Arya Samaj, it had established many social and educational institutions at several places in the country and its movement had assumed form of national resurrection. It advocated many radical social and religious reforms, thereby awakening the cultural soul of the Hindus.

It should be recalled that when Shahu was introduced to the philosophy of the Arya Samaj in 1902, the Vedokta controversy had reached the peak of its heat in Kolhapur. So it was but natural for him to be attracted towards the Samaj which acknowledged the right of every Hindu to the Vedas, irrespective of one's Varna, Caste or sex. The right to the Vedas meant a right to study the Vedas and perform rites with the Vedic Mantras.

Shahu however, did not take any hasty decision. His affection for the Samaj appeared to have remained in a dormant state for many more years to come. By 1916-17 when he started taking decisive and stern steps against the Brahmin bureaucracy which in turn also began counter attacking him vehemently, he openly upheld the mission of the Samaj and explicitly declared his support to it.

In this context, Shahu had expressly stated his stand in one of his letters to his British friend, Robertson. He says, "I am supporting Satyashodhak Samaj and the Arya Samaj for one more reason. By heart, I am an Arya Samajist and even if I do not openly profess it, I love their principles. Brahmins have treated me badly and especially after my address at the Khamgaon conference (December 27, 1917) the way they behaved with me has given me a fresh reason to overtly acknowledge my love for the principles of the Arya Samaj. The Samaj teaches us commitment to the Vedas and not to the Puranas. For the Puranas are imaginary tales fabricated by Brahmins during the period after the Vedas were written. The Maharaja of Idor Sir Pratapsinghji and I have contemplated on these principles many times and we share the same opinion on this subject." He continues, "the principles of the Arya Samaj teach equality of men and ask to throw off the religious monopoly of the Brahmins."[5]

As stated earlier Swami Dayanand strongly advocated the principle of equality of human being on the basis of which all Hindus were entitled to the right to the Vedas, i.e. right to study the Vedas and to perform rites with the Vedic Mantras. Shahu had passed through an ordeal of Vedokta controversy where he was denied the said right by the orthodox Maharastrian Brahmins. Hence, Shahu was feeling strong sense of affinity towards the philosophy of the Samaj. His views regarding this are aptly reflected in his presidential address at the convention of the Arya Samaj held in Navsari He said, "Shri Swami Dayanandji propounded that every human being has right to Vedas and facilitated the spread of Vedic knowledge in North India. Millions of People joined the Arya Samaj and they established educational institutions such as Gurukuls, high schools, colleges etc. The propagation that everyone has right to Vedas led to a consciousness of equality and a kind of quality life. The teachings of Swami Dayanand spread fast in the north but to the south of the Narmada they began to be strongly opposed. This is due to the strength of the Brahmin bureaucracy here. When Brahmin bureaucracy heard Swamiji's thoughtful speeches during his brief sojourn in Poona it realized that the views of the Arya Samaja are poison for them and to oppose the procession of the

Swami the rogue idea of parading "Gardabhanand Saraswati" originated in their mind."[6]

One more reason why Shahu felt affinity towards the Arya Samaj was it had declared war against caste discrimination and untouchability. Shahu had been forcefully fighting against these social evils for years together. Naturally he saw in the Samaj an effective and strong means of annihilating caste discrimination and untouchability. Hence, in the context of separate electrorates which would contribute to establishing social equality we find him writing to Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, that in spite of its dogmatic religious foundation, the Arya Samaj advocated social equality and because of that its organization could fight the Brahmin bureaucracy successfully, preparing the non-Brahmin society for democracy in future.[7]

Shahu's Patronage to the Arya Samaj

It should be noted here that before Shahu had openly espoused the Arya Samaj, he had extended his patronage to the Satyashodhak Samaj in 1911. However, he was of the opinion that the Satyashokhak Samaj alone could not fight the oppression of Brahmin bureaucracy and that though the Satyasamajists were successful in exposing the dark side of the Brahmin bureaucracy, it had failed to vanquish its tyranny. So he thought that one more supportive organization like the Arya Samaj was essential for fighting the bureaucracy. The radicals in the Samaj, he felt, would be of much help in his struggle against the bureaucracy. In this context, he writes to Major Wodehouse, the Resident of Kolhapur, "There are fanatical activists among Muslims, Arya Samajists, and Brahmins. However, I am of the opinion that to expose all the religious frauds of the Brahmins and to check them, such ardent opponents are essential. That is precisely why I am encouraging the Arya Samaj."[8]

The Arya Samaj was divided into two factions. The faction which included Mahatma Hansraj, Sir Pratapsingh Maharaja etc. was loyal to the British Government, and the faction which included Lala Lajpat Rai, Swami Shradhananda etc. was a part of the National Freedom Movement against the British rule in India. As a Native Ruler under the British Paramountcy Shahu could not join the second faction but naturally preferred to attach himself to the first faction of Sir Pratapsingh. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that Sir Pratapsingh had actively participated in the (first) World War on the side of the British. Shahu himself was confident about the good relations between the British Government and the Arya Samaj, especially the faction led by Sir Pratapsingh.

In 1917, Swami Parmanad from Agra, obviously at the instance of Shahu had come to Kolhapur and established a vernacular school and a Gurukul at Kerle, a village near Kolhapur.[9] Later that school along with Gurukul was shifted to Kolhapur. On April 3, 1918, the Swamiji established at Kolhapur Arya Samaj affiliated to the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha U.P. under the Patronage of Shahu. Soon, the

Swamiji left Kolhapur for the north and Pandit Atmaram came in his place. At the order of Shahu Panditji started a first grade Anglo vernacular school and a Gurukul attached to it in Kolhapur. Shahu liberally donated land, buildings and annual grant of Rs. 5000/- to Arya Samaj for the educational purposes. [10] Later on, Shahu handed over the Management of Rajaram Highschool and Rajaram Collage to the Arya Prabinidhi Sabha. [11]

The students, regardless of their castes, including the untouchables, were admitted in the Gurukul and all education was made free of cost. Even the untouchable boys were taught the Vedas. Shahu must be the moving spirit behind all such activities. He had made the study of 'Satyarthprakash', the Bible of the Aray Samaj, compulsory for the students of Talati class. In one of his orders he says, "The ongoing classes to train Talatis and Patils shall be conducted in the Thatti building at Padmala and the book 'Satyarth Prakash' of the Arya Samaj shall be taught to the students for an hour at the least everyday. Satyarthprakash has been included in the syllabus of Talati and Patil examinations and it is mandatory to pass in it as in the other subjects" [12]

Shahu Dreamt the Arya Samaj as a World Religion

Shahu was confident that the Arya Dharma would rapidly spread throughout India as its solid foundation rested on the teaching of Vedas which were revered by every one. To him, India was a nation in the making and the Arya Samaj had a very important role to play in the process of its nation making. In his address, to the convention of the Arya Samaj, he says, "This country Aryavarta was never a nation anytime before. However, now that the British are the common political rulers everywhere, the feeling of nationality is taking shape and it is gradually increasing. The contribution of the Arya Samaj towards the increase in such feeling is commendable. Arya Samaj assimilates the Arya people of this country irrespective of the caste or sect to which they belong. Moreover, it also assimilates the non-Aryan people within its fold and accords them all rights of an Arya including those of intermarriage and interdining." [13]

Shahu further makes an appeal to the Samjists to take into their fold the European and American people who also belong to the Aryan race, "Arya Samaj would not step back from including within their fold the Teutonic people from the Europe and American continents who, the scholars agree, belong to the Aryan Race. Earlier all Aryan people used to stay together in the Artic area. Later they had to leave that territory. Some tribes migrated towards the West and some towards the East. The mighty European nations are the progeny of those tribes that migrated westwards whereas we the people of Aryavarta are the offspring of the Aryas that migrated eastwards. Therefore, the Europeans and their offspring, the Americans are in no way foreigners to us. The great warriors of the West such as Lord Kitchner, General French, and Marshal Fouck etc. have proved their Kshatratej on the

battlefield. According to you they are certainly Kshatriayas (luster of Kshatriyas) and if they desire you would definitely initiate them into the Aryan religion."[14]

Thus, Shahu had dreamt the Arya Samaj not only spreading over India and becoming a national religion, but spreading over Europe and America and emerging as a world religion. This was not to be achieved by cutting across all other religions and establishing its sway over them. To him, basically the Aryan religion was a humanitarian religion which accorded the rights of equality and freedom to every individual for development of his personality.

Shahu, Arya Samaj and the British

Shahu on his own kept the British Government informed about the Social Movements in his State. On January 19, 1918, he informed Col. Wodehouse that he wished to break the passive Resistance Movement by introducing Satyashodhak Samaj and Arya Samaj. Some time back when he was in Bombay, he met one Atmaram Pandit, an Arya Samajist from Baroda, and learned from him that Arya Samaj was in the good grace of the British Government, having recently granted 2000 acres of land for the Shudhisabha (purificatory branch of the Samaj) at Sialkot and annual grant of Rs. 20,000/- to its orphanage at Ferojpur in the Punjab. Sir Pratapsinha Maharaja of Idar was the President of the Samaj Shahu asked Pt. Atmaram to give him an Arya Samaj worker who 'would teach us Vedas and help the Satya Shodhak Samaj and be useful to teach untouchables.' Pt. Atmaram gave one Swami Parmanand from Agra. While concluding the letter Shahu says, "Government is helping Arya Samaj because they don't dabble in politics. They are religious and social body and are helpful to Government in counteracting the extremists. That is why I am having them here"[15]

It is already noted how Arya Samaj was established in Kolhapur with the help of Swami Paramanad. A School and a Gurukul were alsc started. Later in Feb. 1919, while urging Mr. Montagu, to give communal representation to the backward classes, Shahu says, "I humbly think that the Arya Samaj who base their religious activities on the Vedas and preach equality are alone able to cope with the Brahmin tyranny and the spread of their tenets alone will make India fit for representative political institutions."[16]

The British Government were having their eye on the movements and activities of the Arya Samajists in Kolhapur State, because some of them were having connection with the movement of Lala Lajpat Rai. Shahu himself used to inform their arrival and who's who.

In Feb. 1919, Kunwar Hukumsingji, the President of Arya Pratinidhi Sabha from U.P. along with his three colleagues, visited Kolhapur. Shahu is found informing their names and identification to Col. Wodehouse. While expressing his honesty and sincere loyalty to the Governemnt, he writes, "I would never care for a Satya Shodhak, or an Arya Samajist or even the angels. If he be a suspect, I will at

once hand him over to Government for prosecution ..... But at all cost and at all hazards I will ever remain a British loyalist."[17]

In his letter, dated February 27, 1919, Shahu tells Col. Wodehouse why he keeps the Arya Samajists like Pt. Atmaram with him. "To save us and protect us from extremists and worst characters, I have retained Pandit Atmaram Shastri, his sons and Swami Pramanand. Pandit Atmaram Shastri has saved us from Swami Shraddhanand and other undesirable Arya Samajists entering Kolhapur and that is why I wish to keep these persons here." He adds that he wished to keep Swami Paramanand to teach Sanskrit to the boys in Kolhapur. He moreover expressed confidence that the Arya Samajists alone could break down Brahminism. In the same letter, he has unfolded his personal involvement in Arya Samaj, saying that he himself, his relations and all the members of his family have become believers in the Arya Samaj.[18]

In March 1919, Shahu handed over Rajaram College and Rajaram Highschool, two renowned institutions of Kolhapur, to the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, U.P. [19] Loyalty to the British and Kolhapur Darbar was the prime condition incorporated in the agreement between the Darbar and the Sabha. It was explicitly mentioned in the agreement that if person serving in the above institutions proved to be disloyal would be removed from the staff at the desire of the Darbar.[20]

However, Shahu's British friends and perhaps the British Government were not sure that it was safe to 'use' the Arya Samajists. Mr. Cadell, former War Secretary to the Government of Bombay, writes to Shahu, "Whether it is safe to use the Arya Samajists is a point on which I can offer no opinion. They have not got a good reputation elsewhere, and it is dangerous to use a loot of whose value you are uncertain."[21] [14 April, 1919]

Shahu's informer, one Mr. Rege, perhaps from Poona or Bombay, also informed Shahu about Arya Samaj's connection with the National Movement under Gandhi. In his detailed letter, dated January 19, 1921, Rege writes that the leaders of Arya Samaj have been caught in the net of Gandhi and that they have actively been participating in his movement. He adds that the Secretary of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha has also been involved in the movement. Hence, Shahu should be beware of these Arya Samajists.[22]

Shahu, however, did not seem to have paid any heed to the warnings of either his British friends or his informers. He continued to take assistance and advice from the Arya Samajits. The reason must be his being the follower of Arya Samaj and his secret symphathy to those Samajists who were involved in the Freedom Movement of the Country.

Shahu and the Satyashodhak Samaj

Mahatma Jotirao Phule, a social revolutionary in the 19th Century, founded the Satyashodhak Samaj (Society of seekers of truth) in 1873. To liberate the Shudras and Atishudras from the clutches of the Brahmin autocracy and to

restore their social and religious rights were the main objectives of the Samaj. Its membership was open to all, irrespective of caste, creed or religion. According to the principles of the Samaj all human beings are equal and children of creator and there is no need of any intermediary to worship or to appease Him (Nirmik: the Creator of the World). Mahatma Phule did not recognize the Vedas as holy texts and vehemently opposed the *Chaturvarnya* (four fold system) and caste – system.[23]

However, the work of the Satyashodhak Samaj slowed down after the death of Phule. Savitribai, his wife, Krishnarao Bhalekar and Naraya Meghaji Lokhande, his associates somehow continued the work of the Samaj, but following their death in 1890s the Satyashodhak Samaj activities received a serious setback.

When, by the end of the 19th Century, the Vedokta controversy broke out in Kolhapur and rocked the social life of Maharashtra, the non-Brahmin intellectuals and leaders began to feel the need of revival of the Satyashodhak Samaj. In 1910, they met under the leadership of Vitthal Ramaji Shinde, a veteran intellectual and activist, and revived the Satyashodhak Samaj in Bombay. The next year, they organized a convention of the Samaj in Poona which was presided over by Ramayya Ayyavaru, one of the associates of Phule. The aims and objectives of the Samaj, espoused by Phule, were discussed and declared to the people at large.[24]

Satyashodhak Samaj in Kolhapur

In course of time Kolhapur became a center of the non-Brahmin activities in Maharashtra. As a result of the Vedokta Controversy, the non - Brahmin society had developed the mental strength and moral courage to oppose the Brahmin tyranny. That Kolhapur had become a home of non-Brahmin intellectuals like Bhaskarrao Jadhav and Annasaheb Latthe and it was a seat of power of Chhatrapati Shahu, the well – wisher of the non – Brahmins also largely contributed to the resurrection of the Satyashodhak movement.

On January, 11, 1911, the social activitists in Kolhapur convened a meeting and formed the Satyashodhak Samaj, under the title of 'Shri Shahu Satyashodhak Samaj.' Bhaskarrao Jadhav and Annasaheb Latthe were elected its President and Vice – President respectively. Mahadeorao Dongre became the Chief – Officer and Haribhau Chavan, the Secretary.[25] All these office bearers were in the service of the Kolhapur State. It was very clear that Shahu had encouraged them and provided support for the formation of the Samaj.

On August 21, 1912, Baburao Yadav, a staunch Satyashodhak activist, performed the Vedokta Shravani under the auspices of a Maratha priest. In the evening, about 150 persons from the Maratha community held a public meeting where they prayed the Almighty to free minds of the non – Brahmins from the clutches of Brahmnism. This created stir amongst both the Brahmin and non – Brahmin communities. The non–Brahmins started performing their religious rites without help of the Brahmin priests. Even the marriages were performed without Brahmin priests. It was recorded in 1912 that it was in Kolhapur alone that 200

marriages were performed in a Satyashodhak way, under the auspices of the Satyashodhak activists. The wave of this radical social change began spreading to the villages in the Kolhapur State.[26] In 1913, the Satyashodhak activists started a Satyashodhak school under the guidance of Bhaskarrao Jadhav. Vitthalrao Donay, a palace employee, was teacher in the school. Shahu gave financial help to the school and provided land and building facilities. It is interesting to note that Bhaskrrao had prepared syllabus for the course and written a book 'Gharacha Purohit' (Home Priest) for the students of the school who would learn how to perform religious rites without help of Brahmin priests.[27]

The Tar Episode of 1914

While the Satyashodhak movement was fast gaining momentum, it received a great setback in the form of Tar episode in 1914. It was the result of villainous intrigues of a faction in the Royal Court, led by Balasaheb Gaikwad, supported by the Sardars and merchants of the Kolhapur State. The other faction led by Bhaskarrao Jadhav comprised of the Satyashodhok leaders and activists like Latthe, Dongre etc. These two factions had been fighting and outsmarting each other for domination in the Royal Court. Their rivalries sometimes put Shahu in very awkward situation. It was against this background that the Tar episode suddenly erupted. Some miscreants applied Tar to the statues of King Edward and Queen Alexandra at the midnight of February 14, 1914. A wave of shock and excitement surged through not only the Kolhapur State but also the Bombay Presidency. Even in the British Parliament, Sir J.D. Reed raised the issue on March, 3, 1914. Certainly, it was a severe blow to the image of Shahu as a loyal Native Ruler. Naturally, the Kolhapur Durbar declared a reward of Rs. 5000/- on the culprits.[28]

One Kallappanna Nitve, a rich merchant, belonging to the Gaikwad faction, saw an opportunity to harass Latthe, his arch rival, by implicating him in the Tar Case. Latthe, however, was fortunate enough to sense the danger and quickly ran out of Kolhapur to save his life. Exploiting the Tar Case to their full advantage the Gaikwad – Nitve faction emerged dominant and the Jadhav faction seemed to be defeated and disgraced for a while. The Satyashodhak movement had to suffer in the conflict. Under the pressure of the circumstances, Jadhav, Latthe and Dongre had to sever connection with the Samaj. Even though he was the spirit behind the Satyashodhak activities in the Kolhapur State, Shahu could not display his sympathies for the Samaj openly.[29]

Tar episode lingered on over the years and then slowly faded away without apprehending the culprits. No doubt, it gave a setback to the Satyashodhak movement. But it was short-lived. From 1916 onwards Jadhav, Latthe, Dongre were found participating in the activities of the Samaj. Shahu also revived his patronage to the Samaj and began to support it openly. Satyashodhak movement once again gained a momentum when it was joined by young active leaders like Shripatrao Shinde, Walchand Kothari, Bhagwantrao Palekar, Mukundrao Patil etc.

Royal Patronage to the Samaj

From the very beginning the Satyashodhak Samaj had been receiving assistance from Shahu in many forms and ways directly and indirectly to facilitate the spread of Satyashodhak doctrine of social equality. For example, in 1916, he asked Keshavrao Patil, his valet, to start an inn for intercaste dining in Kolhapur. He was provided with all the facilities of building and monthly expenses. No doubt, it was a social experiment aimed at the eradication of caste discrimination.[30]

Another Satyshodhak activist Baburao Yadav, who was known as 'a gigantic cannon of the Samaj', was in the service of Shahu. He had dedicated his life to propagate the Satyashodhak doctrines with missionary zeal. Shahu often allowed him to go on full pay leave with traveling allowances 'for carrying out the work of Satyashodhak Samaj'[31] It seems Baburao was an employee on paper only, and was working as if he were a full time worker of the Satyashodhak Samaj.

Shahir Lahari Hyder, a poet and a close associate of Shahu, used to propagate the principles of the Samaj through his Satyashodhak Bhajans (devotional songs). He was granted land and material and asked to construct a building for the purpose of singing bhajans.[32]

Financial assistance to the Samaj was also provided from time to time by Shahu. For example, he granted a sum of Rs. 5000/- to the Samaj in August 1920. The amount was handed over to Bhaskarrao Jadhav.

In the year 1920, Shahu took very many bold decisions favourable to the principles of the Samaj. In June, he issued an order that all the religious rites in the Palace and worships of the deities and Samadhis (tombs) of ancestors were to be performed not by the Brahmin priests, but by the Maratha ones.[33] He even removed Brahmin Pujaris (Clerics) from Patgaon Matha of Maunibuva and Jotiba temple of Wadi Ratnagiri in the following December.[34]

Shahu's second important decision was to start Vedic school for the training of the Maratha priests. The school management was entrusted to Mahadeorao Dongre and Mamasaheb Khanvilkar. A number of students joined the school. They were 62 in all by the end of the year i.e. 1920. His decision to install Sadashivrao Patil Benadikar as the Kshatrajagadguru on the holy seat of Maunibuva, a saint of Shivaji's times, was the most important and bold step. It was a social measure adopted by Shahu in order to free the Maratha community from the dominance of the Brahmin autocracy, especially the Shankaracharya.

The creation and launching of the Satyashodhak Jalasa was Shahu's significant contribution to the mission of the Samaj. Jalasa or Tamasha (Marathi Folk Theatre) was a popular medium of entertainment amongst the illiterate masses. Shahu knew the hidden strength of the folk thearte, therefore decided to transform the Jalasa into the Satyashodhak Jalasa, propagating and promoting the Satyashodhak values and thereby awakening the ignorant masses of the villages. Many Shahirs (folk – poets) and the activists were encouraged to start the

Satyashodhak Jalasas. The Jalasa troupes of Bhimrao Mahamuni, Bhaurao Patole, and Ganpatrao More were the leading performers. Sometimes, Shahu took personal interest in the show and guided the troupe if necessary. The Shahirs would take social issues to the masses through their performances, such as superstitions in the society, brutal customs like tonsure of Brahmin widows, exploitation of the Rayats by merchants and moneylenders, importance of education, extravagance in marriage ceremony, eradication of untouchability etc. [35]

In early 1920, the Satyashodhak Conference was convened in Karad under the presidentship of Mukundrao Patil, a veteran Satyashodhak leader and journalist. The Karad Brahmins approached the local Brahmin Mamaledar and incited him to invoke article 144 to ban the conference. Upon learning the crooked move of the Brahmins, the Satyashodhak Samajists made complaint to the Collector of Satara, Mr. Moyce who lifted the ban and allowed the Conference to be held. The Conference was a big success. The Satyashodhak journal "*Dinmitra*" notes that Shahu was a moving spirit behind the conference. He provided money and material including tents, chairs, and carpets etc. for making the conference a success. [36] The activists like Keshavrao Vichare and Bhaurao Patil had made Satara District as one of the leading strongholds of the Samaj in Maharashtra. Especially, the Satyashodhak Jalasa of Bhaurao Patil had become immensely popular amongst the masses of rural areas. [37]

However, it should be noted that the Satyashodhak movement, revived by Shahu, did not remain restricted to Kolhapur and Satara regions only. Backed and encouraged by Shahu, it surged into the regions like Poona, Belgaum, Hubli, Ahmednagar, Khandesh and Berar.

Shahu died on May, 6, 1922. On the 7th, the last rites were performed amidst the recitation of Vedic Mantras on the banks of Panchganga, not by the Brahmin priests as the tradition had it but by the students of the Shivaji Vedic School under the instructions of Maharani Laxmibai and the new Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj. No doubt, it was proper gesture befitting Shahu's life long mission, seeking freedom from the Brahmin autocracy. [38]

Shahu: the Right Hand of Satyashodhak Samaj

The Satyashodhak movement received a severe blow with the death of Shahu. While expressing sorrow on his death, the noted Sayashodhak journalist Bahagwantrao Palekar writes, "The right hand of Sayashodhak Samaj movement and the umbrella of love and affection over the heads of the untouchables is lost." [39]

Another journalist, Achutrao Kolhatkar though himself a Brahmin, was an ardent admirer of Shahu and his work. Regarding Shahu's contribution to the cause of the Satyashodhak movement, he writes, "If this movement were not to have a loving motherly figure in the person of Rajarshi Shahu to pamper it, if it were not to acquire a brave diplomat in his person who could easily knock out even the best in

the trade, this movement would have either turned tame like the Prarthana Samaj or lonely like the moderate reformers in Maharashtra." [40]

Bhaskarrao Jadhav and Khanderao Bagal the close associates of Shahu and prominent Satyashodhak leaders also had given all credit of resurrection of the Samaj to Shahu alone. Jadhav writes, "All the credit for the success the activists of Samaj achieved goes to the efforts of Shahu Maharaj." [41] His colleague Khanderao Bagal says, "Shahu Maharaja, with banners of Satya Samaj in one hand and of equality in the other disseminated the principle of Mahatma Phule all over Maharashtra." [42]

Why Shahu openly disowned the Satyashodhak Movement

Though it was a historical fact that Shahu was mainly responsible for the revival and spread of the Satyashodhak movement all over Maharashtra and though almost all the contemporary Satyashodhak leaders and activists acknowledged his contribution to the Samaj, Shahu himself had to declare that he had been against the movement and that he had nothing to do with it.

In his letter to Khaserao Jadhav, his friend from Baroda, in 1920, Shahu writes, "I have been making it explicitly clear in all my public addresses that I am against the Satyashodhak Samaj.....I have seen some Satyashodhak Jalasa performances in the same way I have listened to the preaching of the Christian missionaries. However, I do not conform to their views at all. Just as I agree to some views of Christians and Muslims, I concur with some of the Satyashodhak opinions as well. But that does not amount to my being a Satyashodhak." [43]

The next year a Satyashodhak journal 'Jagruti' published a letter from Shahu, in which he says, "I was never a Satyasamajist and I am not ..... In Kolhapur there are many sects such as Arya Samaj, Theosophy etc. Satya Samaj is one of them. When I completely believe in the Vedas and I adhere to it strictly then why this assault against me? " [44]

If Shahu was the main architect of the resurrection of the Satyashodhak movement, as stated above, then one wonders why he should disown the movement in such explicit way. The answer is to be sought in the contemporary volatile situation created by the troupes of Satyashodhak Jalasas all over Maharashtra, especially in regions of Satara, Solapur and Nagar. These troupes would perform scratchy programmes exposing the frauds of the Brahmin autocracy. Such performances wrought direct effect upon the non-Brahmin community with anti-Brahmin sentiments running high. In some villages, the Brahmin families were boycotted by the non-Brahmins, especially the balutedars, such as potters, barbers. The Rayats refused to till their lands. At some places, the enthusiastic Satyashodhak activists took aggressive steps, which resulted into brawls between the two communities, the Brahmin and non-Brahmin. Some times the two communities clashed physically and lodged the criminal cases against each other, genuine or false! However, such events were flashed in the Brahmin newspapers with sensational

headlines as "the atrocities of Satyasamajists" and at many places the 'Brahmin Saurashkan Sabhas' (Committees for protecting the Brahmins) were formed to enquire into the so called atrocities committed by the Satyasamajists. And wherever such events took place, the Brahmin newspapers invariably pointed fingers at Shahu as a prime instigator behind the scene.[45] They also demanded that the British Government should take the serious note of Shahu's behaviour and reprimand him for that. The British Government also had become restless and cautious about the clashes and conflicts between the two communities which often created law and order problems at many places. Hence, they started sending letters of enquiry to Shahu.[46]

Shahu was the ruler of Kolhapur State. So he could check or control the activities of any organization in his State. Being a vassal to the British Paramount Power, he could not control the activities of any movement in British India, nor could he take the moral responsibility of any such movement. If he were to pronounce that he had been a Satyasamajist, naturally it would be tantamount to acceptance of moral responsibility for all the acts of the Samajists in the Bombay Presidency. Thus, he was in a dilemma as to what to do with the charges levelled against him by the Brahmin leaders and the newspapers. Under such circumstances he was obliged to make the public statements such as 'I was never a Satyasamajist nor I am'. These were his diplomatic statements and should be read in the context of the then prevailing social and political environment. Otherwise, there is every possibility that such statements would certainly mislead the scholars.

Shahu – A Satyasamajist at Heart

In 1920, the followers of Tilak disrupted the public meeting of Shahu in Poona. Moreover, they lodged a complaint of inciting arson against him. Later, when Khaserao Jadhav tried to mediate between them, the Tilakites cunningly put forth the condition that they would withdraw the case if Shahu withdrew his support to the Maratha League and the Satyashodhak Samaj. To this Shahu categorically declined. In this context, Shahu wrote to Montegomery, the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, that not extending his support to such organizations would amount to asking them to abandon their mission. [47] He repeated same sentiments in his letter to Khaserao also. He writes, "I would never part with people and castes who are friendly to me. I would not act against my objectives. I have had to suffer a great deal on account of my outspokenness and I am ready to undergo suffering."[48]

This clearly shows that though Shahu had refused to accept the label of the Satyashodhak Samaj for his social work, he was not prepared to part from the Satyasamajists or to stop providing assistance to them in their mission. It was because of his being a true Satyasamajist at heart. In fact, barring his commitment to the Vedas, there was hardly any difference between his mission and that of the Satyashodhak Samaj. His mission consisted of tasks such as breaking of Brahmin

monopoly in the field of religion and social life, eradication of caste discrimination and untouchability and spread of education amongst the illiterate masses. Was it not the same work as that of the Satyashodhak Samaj? Hence, there is no wonder that the Samajists hailed him as a true Satyasamajist, turning a Nelson's eye towards his commitment or loyalty to the Vedas. In regarding Shahu as a Satyasamajist, the Samajists were not wrongly interpreting his work, but appreciating it appropriately and correctly.

Shahu, Satyshodhak Samaj and the British

In the records of Shahu – British Relations, stray references are found, throwing some light on the activities of Satyashodhak Samaj. It would be instructive to note them here with a view to understanding the British attitude towards the Satyasmajists and Shahu's protective policy with regard to them.

1. Early in 1919, Baburao Yadav, Shripatrao Shinde and Walchan Kothari, the Satya samajists and the leaders of the non-Brahmin Movement, had been to Dharwar and Hubli side. They had been calling meetings of the non-Brahmins and propagating their views. One of their meetings was assailed by some two Brahmins in a block. The report, received by Shahu, says that the Brahmins eventually 'came to grief.'

Col. Wodehouse, the Resident of Kolhapur too recived the report of the said meeting and he made inquiry from Shahu whether Yadav, Shinde and Kothari were sent there by him or with his approval.[49] [February 8, 1919]

To this inquiry, Shahu promptly replied, "I did not send them, nor do they want my approval. They are strong willed and self- sacrificing person of course, I am their admirer as they are fighting for the Backward Classes against heavy odds."

According to Shahu, one of the good results of such skirmishes was realization of the reality by the Brahmins. They came to know that without the support of the government, their bureaucracy would not work and that the backward classes would gain the upper hand. In the end, Shahu requests the Government that if the non-Brahmin activities are reported to them, no action may be taken without proper inquiry as matters are likely to be misrepresented owing to the non-Brahmin classes being inarticulate and having no backing in Government offices.[50]

2. In September 1920 Mr. Huddson, the Collector of Poona District, conveyed Shahu that he did not much approve of Satyashodhak Samaj Jalasa and asked him to stop them when the latter went to Baramati next. Shahu most politely but diplomatically brings to the notice of Mr. Huddson that it would not be in accordance with the settled policy of the Government to stop the Jalasas. Shahu in his letter dated October 2, 1920, says, "You will allow me to bring to your notice that the religious movement known as that of the Satya Shodhak Samaj dates from the days of Queen Victoria of blessed memory. The settled policy of the British

Government is not to interfere with the religious practices or thoughts of the subjects and this ought to be always strictly followed."

Enclosing the need of Satyashodhak Jalasas Shahu Writes that Satyashodhak Samaj has found the Jalasa a powerful weapon in their hand and that through Jalasas, their preaching goes home directly awakening the masses to their hardships under the Brahmin yoke. He further adds that the Jalasas are playing an important role in the election campaign and that the chances of Non-Brahmin (Candidates) are equally improving."

In the end, Shahu appeals to Mr. Huddson that as a Collector of Poona he should not check the Movement but should, on the contrary, encourage it."[51]

3. Mr. Macgregor, the Collector of Belgaum was friend of Shahu and a symphathiser with Satyashodhak Samaj. In December, 1920, he was on the tour in the District and on the 14th instant he from his camp at Chikodi, had sent a letter to Shahu, regarding the activities of the Satyasamjists in the Belgaum area. He writes -

"As regards the Satya Shodhak Samaj, I am not opposed to it at all, but although it is a social revolt against the ascendancy of the Brahmins, it is a movement by a class against a class, and I cannot as a Government servant openly encourage one class against another; however much I may sympathise with the Samaj. I hold myself entirely aloof from the controversy. When a Satya Shodhak Samaj Jalasa Party came to Belgaum, I did not prohibit the performance, but I had to excuse pretty freely passages out of the book which in my opinion degenerated into mere filthy abuse."[52]

The Belgaum Collector's letter is itself a proof to show how the British officers were instructed by the Bombay Government in respect of Satyashodhak Samaj. The letter speaks volumes for the Government Policy.

British Attitude towards the Social Movements

In the Bombay Presidency, the political movements, aimed at the political freedom of the Country, were mainly conducted by the elite class of the society. The Maharashtrian Brahmins, under the leadership of Tilak in Poona, played a dominant part in it. The social movements, especially the radical social movement, aimed at redemption of the masses from social bondage, were led by the leaders of the masses like Phule and Shahu.

The political leaders were fighting against the alien power for the political rights and eventually for political freedom of the Country. Whereas the social leaders were fighting against their own country-men for obtaining the social rights and eventually for creating a new society based on social equality and freedom. Thus, top priority of the political leaders was political freedom of the Country, whereas that of the social leaders was social freedom of the illiterate masses. Political leaders considered the British as their antagonists while to the social leaders, the British were their benefactors.

There were four main social reform organizations in the Bombay Presidency, viz. Prathana Samaj, Arya Samaj, Theosophy and Satyashodhak Samaj. The first three organizations were confined to the upper class of the society. They did discuss and ponder over the need of religious and social reforms, pertaining to the higher strata of the society. However, they could hardly think of radical social reforms which would transform the life of the downtrodden masses. Moreover, all these organizations, including Prarthana Samaj which was an offshoot of Brahmo Samaj, had their genesis out of Maharashtra. But Satyashodhak Samaj was a sprout that naturally cropped in the soil of Maharashtra. Its founder Phule himself belonged to the Shudra class and his mission was to free the Shudras and Atishudras from the bondage of the Brahmin autocracy. About 95% of the population belonged to this class. Even the Marathas, once the proud ruling class of Maharashtra, were degraded by the Maharashtrian Brahmins as the Shudras. Naturally, the Satyashodhak movement became a mass movement in Maharashtra.

So far as the Kolhapur State was concerned, the Satyashodhak Movement was the main social movement of the masses. It was patronized by Shahu himself. As stated earlier he had revived the movement in Maharashtra. Though, in 1914, the movement had received setback in the form of Tar episode, the British Government did not seem to have charged the Samajists with that seditious act. This might have encouraged Shahu to help the Satyashodhak movement secretly in later years of his reign. His close associates like Bhaskarrao Jadhav began to take active part in the movement.

It is already observed that the political movement i.e. the freedom movement, in the Bombay Presidency was predominantly led by the Brahmin activists under the leadership of Tilak who looked upon the British as their No.1 enemy. And to the Britishers, the Brahmins were their principal antagonists. Thus, the British and Satyasamajists had one common enemy, i.e. the Brahmin class, in the Presidency. Naturally, the British had sympathies with the Satyashodhak Movement and at times facilitated its activities of awakening the backward classes. We have seen how the Satara Collector helped the Samajists by lifting a ban on their conference and allowing them to hold it at Karad. However, such a sympathetic attitude of the British Government towards the Satyashodhak Movement was in conformity with their policy of 'Divide and Rule'. Not that the leaders of the Satyashodhak Movement were ignorant of this policy. But they had no choice. They had to follow the universal principle of power politics i.e. our enemy's enemy is our friend. Thus in their fight against the Brahmanical autocracy, they were the allies of the British and their supporters.

The Satyashodhak Samajists could openly show their loyalty to the British Government. However, the Government could not sympatize with them openly. They had to make a show that they, as a Government, were neutral and just to all. But that was not the case. They had definite sympathics with the Samajists and

feeling of animosity torwards the Brahmins, especially those who were involved in the militant nationalist activities.

Thus, it was a struggle between the British and the Samajists on one side and the Brahmins on the other. Each one of them knew the motives of one another and had their own objectives to be achieved.

Out of Satyashodhak movement there arose in Maharashtra the non-Brahmin movement. Though it was a politically oriented movement it was firmly rested on the rock of Satyashodhak movement. Even the most of the leaders of the non – Brahmin movement were formarly the strong activists of Satyashodhak Samaj; and they used to propagate the principles of Satyashodhak Samaj along their political propaganda through the medium of Satyashodhak Jalsas.

Shahu And non-Brahmin Movement

Shahu was considered as a pioneer of non-Brahmin Movement in Maharashtra in 1917. The movement emerged as result of Montagu's historic announcement in 1917 and it aimed at securing maximum political benefits of the Mont-ford Reforms for the non-Brahmin masses. Naturally it was branded as non-Brahmin movement by the Brahmins.

However, in a correct historical perspective, the non- Brahmin movement of 1917 was not the first of its kind. The Satyashodhak movement of Mahatma Phule in 1873 started with the establishment of Satyashodhak Samaj was basically a non-Brahmin movement, meant for fighting totalitarian tyrannical authority of the Brahmin autocracy. It was the first non-Brahmin Movement in Maharashtra. The Vedokta movement of Shahu, at the fag-end of the 19th century, was the second non-Brahmin movement in Maharashtra. It was launched with a view to abolish the monopoly of the Brahmins in the field of religion. Shahu later in the 1910s resurrected the Satyashodhak movement. Thus by conducting these two social movements, he had prepared the background of the third non-Brahmin movement in 1917. The credit of converting the aforesaid two social movements into a political-oriented non-Brahmin movement goes to Shahu Chhatrapati of Kolhapur. It was he who brought almost all the Satyashodhak leaders and the activists into the main stream of the non-Brahmin movement of 1917.

The non-Brahmin movement in totality during the reign of Shahu was strengthened with his following socially revolutionary measures; namely:

1. Declaration of Reservation Policy, i.e. reserving 50% administrative post in the State;
2. Establishment of Students Hostels for almost every caste of the backward class;
3. Establishment of the Vedic school for creating the Maratha Priesthood;
4. Creation of a Seal of Kshatrajagadguru for achieving freedom from the Brahminical autocracy;
5. Abolition of evil social tradition of untouchability

6. Legal and social encouragement to inter caste marriage with a view to annihilate the caste-system.
7. Free and compulsory primary education to the masses.
8. Abolition of the Kulkarni Watan with a view to dispel evil influence of Kulkarni upon the Rayats.
9. Abolition of the Mahar Watan, liberating Mahars from hereditary slavery.
10. Application of the Principle of Communal Representation to the Kolhapur Municipal Council; etc.[53]

Shahu's non-Brahmin movement had provided stimulus to many centers of non-Brahmin awakening to crop up all over Maharashtra. These centers devoted their energy to establish educational institutions and students hostels for the non-Brahmin community. The center of Nasik was one of the leading centers of non-Brahmin activities. The center had a group of social activitists, mostly the Satyashodhaks, which included D.R.Bhosale, Ganpatrao More, Raosaheb Thorat etc. who were inspired by the work of Shahu. They had set up 'Udajirao Pawar Maratha Boarding House' which was later to be inaugurated by Shahu . The centre continued to emulate the work of Shahu in the Nasik region. Similar non-Brahmin Centers had sprung up all over Maharashtra, especially in the region of Ahmednagar, Khandesh, and Berar. All the activists in these regions called themselves Satyashodhak. It was Shahu's influence, which brought them into the mainstream of the non-Brahmin movement of 1917.[54]

Background of Non-Brahmin Movement of 1917

It is already discussed that non-Brahmin movement, prior to 1917, was basically a social movement, with an objective of achieving social rights and social freedom from the Brahmin autocracy. By 1917, the movement took unexpected turn and began to scramble for the prospective political rights. The change was not brought about overnight. It had a background of contemporary national as well as international happenings.

The World War had begun in 1914. The British Empire, along with its allies, was fully engrossed in the war activities. India too got involved and had to suffer from the pangs of war. Indian National Congress, leading the struggle for National freedom, was the main political party of India. It was under the influence of the 'Moderates'. The 'Extremists' were ousted from the Party long ago. But in year 1914, Tilak was released from the British prison and had been receiving warm welcome by his countrymen all over India. Dr. Annie Besant, one of the senior Congress leaders and also an admirer of Tilak, was seeking a compromise between the Moderates and Extremists. In the meantime, two great leaders of the Moderates, G.K.Ghokhale and Sir. Pherojshah Mehta died in 1915. This facilitated the entry of the Extremists under Tilak in Congress. That very year, Constitution of the Congress was modified and Tilak and his followers were admitted into the fold of the Congress.

The very next year, i.e. 1916, the Congress seemed to have passed under the dominance of Tilak. He along with Dr. Annie Besant, had started the 'Home Rule Movement'. At the Lucknow session of the Congress, he successfully brought about a pact between the Congress and the Muslim league with explicit intention to fight against the imperialist British Government. A joint demand for radical political rights was voiced on the common platform. Meanwhile, the Allies on the European soil started describing the World War as a war between democracy and dictatorship. They also began to pose themselves as the Champion of freedom and democracy in the World. On this background, the Indians under Tilak and Annie Besant were demanding the rights of Home Rule as their birth-rights. Both the leaders were at the height of their popularity and had created great unrest against the British regime all over the Country. In these circumstances there came in 1917 the Montagu's announcement, promising a responsible government (Swarajya) for India within the framework of British Empire. This Swarajya was to be granted step by step and the process of its granting was to start soon. Really, it was an important political move towards Indian freedom, making a long lasting impact on the Indian politics. As Politics and social movements were interdependent, the sphere of Indian social enterprise was bound to be affected.

It was clear that the Congress, as the major Political Party, would receive bulk of benefits of the impending reforms under the Montagu's Scheme. However, the Congress, spearheading the movement of political freedom, was at that time completely dominated by the Brahmins. So it was obvious that the Brahmin autocracy would grow stronger than ever with the accumulation of new political rights. Such a stronger Brahmin autocracy would prove the biggest obstacle in the path of the non-Brahmins, though they were in majority and would remain deprived of the impending reforms, on account of their educational and economic backwardness. The only way to save the non-Brahmin masses from those dangers was to awaken them and prepare them for the fight for their own political rights. This was the background on which Shahu revived the non-Brahmin Movement in 1917.

On analogous background there in the Madras Presidency, a sister movement of similar nature and with similar objectives had come to the fore.It was led by great non-Brahmin leaders such as Dr. Madhavan Nair, Sir P. Tyagraj Chettiar, C. Natesh Mudaliar, Ramswami Mudaliar and Raja of Pangal. In 1916, they had started 'South Indian Peoples' Association' and launched a newspaper called 'Justice' for propagation of their views. After the historic announcement of Montagu, they founded 'South Indian Liberal Federation', a Political Party to claim their Political rights. Soon that party acquired the name 'Justice Party' from its popular mouthpiece 'Justice'.[55]

Shahu's Contribution to Non-Brahmin Movement

About this time, several non-Brahmin associations had appeared on the political horizon of Maharashtra. In 1916, the non-Brahmin leaders such as Prof.

A.B. Latthe, Mukundrao Patil, Walchand Kothari, S.K. Bole etc. had established the 'Deccan Rayat Association', with a view to 'endeavour to protect the rights and interests of the backward Communities and thereby promote national interests while remaining loyal to the British throne'.[56] To propagate their views, they started a news paper, 'the Deccan Rayat'. Later on, in 1918, at the instance of Shahu, his followers such as Bhaskarrao Jadhav, Shripatrao Shainde and other Satyashodhak activists founded another political organization. 'All India Maratha League'.[57] Meanwhile, the Montagu's announcement changed the winds of Politics and the Bombay Presidency witnessed mass awakening of the non-Brahmin Community. Shahu's leadership galvanized them into action, demanding communal representation to the non-Brahmin Castes.

Unfortunately for Maharashtra, Tilak did not sympathize with the demands of the non-Brahmin Community. Not only that but also he began to attack the non-Brahmins in a very sarcastic language. At one time, he ridiculed the demands of the non-Brahmins by scornfully asking whether a Wani (a trader by Caste) was supposed to weigh grocery or a *Kumbhar* (Potter by Caste) to mould pottery in the Legislative Council. [58] Thus, it was Tilak who missed the historic opportunity of a compromise between the Brahmin and non-Brahmin Communities for the second time. In the deep of Vedokta Controversy, the first such opportunity had presented itself. But he had lost it similarly.

Shahu was a vassal ruler under the British Paramount Power; and as such he could not openly take part in the political activities of British India. However, his inner urge to champion the cause of backward classes would not allow him to remain inactive and quiet. Generally, he used to act from the behind the curtains. But at times, he boldly came forth to attend the meetings and Conferences of the non-Brahmins, including the depressed classes. Thus he kept in his hands the reins of the non-Brahmin movement and directed its course till the end of his reign. To his being participant in the political activities in British India, he had his logical argument. He says, "Though I am a king to my subjects, I am a subject of the British Empire also and in this respect our rights and responsibilities are similar to those of the people under the British Rule. Therefore, I am of the view that a king (Native Ruler) should necessarily participate in the politics of British India."[59] However, many British officers such as Fraser and Wodehouse did not agree with Shahu's argument. In the beginning, the Bombay Government kept itself silent on the subject. But the riot in Shahu's meeting at Poona in October 1920 obliged the Government to put some restrictions on his activities in British India.

Shahu had stoutly opposed the Home Rule movement (Swarajya) led by Tilak and Dr. Annie Besant. He was not against the principle of Swarajya. But he was of the view that so long as the non-Brahmin masses suffered from the evils of caste system and educational backwardness, the grant of Swarajya would definitely mean concentration of power in a few hands, i.e. the Brahmins. [60]

In November 1917, Shahu met Mr. Montagu the secretary of States for India, who was on his visit to India to examine the reactions to his 'Announcement' and discuss the imminent reforms with the India leaders. Shahu demanded 'Communal Representation' to the entire non-Brahmin Community including the depressed classes.

One of the important contributions of Shahu to the non-Brahmin movement was his active encouragement and assistance to the non-Brahmin journals. Hitherto the field of journals both Marathi and English was the monopoly of the Brahmins. The Brahmin journals mainly served and safeguarded the interests of the Brahmin Community. Until 1917, the 'Dinmitra' of Mukundrao Patil was alone fighting for the cause of the non-Brahmins. That year two prominent non-Brahmin journalists came to the fore. Walchand Kothari from Poona and Bhagawantaro Palekar from Baroda started the 'Jagrook' and 'Jagriti' respectively. Shahu knew the power of journals in influencing the public opinion. Hence, he felt it urgent to have non-Brahmin journals in order to propagate his views as well as the non-Brahmin Party's politics. So, during the next five years many non-Brahmin journals were started with the help and encouragement of Shahu. To name the few: 'The Deccan Rayat' (English) of Latthe and Kothari, '*Vishwabandhu*' of Balwantrao Pisal, '*Bhagawa Zenda*' of Dattajirao Kurane, '*Tarun Maratha*' of Dinkar Javalkar, '*Garibancha Kaivari*' of Baburao Yadav, '*Vijayi Maratha*' of Shripatrao Shinde, '*Sanjeevan*' of Dattatraya Randive, '*Rashtraveer*' 'Shivchhatrapati' of Keshavrao Bagde and Kirtivanrao Nimbalkar, '*Bahishkrut Bharat*' of Ganesh Akaji Gavai and '*Mooknayak*' of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.[61] Most of these journals had received moral and economic support of Shahu. Most of the above journalists were either the social activists or the leaders of the non-Brahmin masses. Some of them were staunch Satyashodhaks. At times, they fought with each other and Shahu had come forth to settle their disputes and quarrels.[62]

Shahu's one more contribution to the non-Brahmin movement was the establishment of his contact with the 'Justice Party' (non-Brahmin movement) of the Madras Presidency and exchange of ideas with its leaders such as Dr. Madhavan Nayar and Sir. P. Tyagraj Chettiyar. Dr. Nayar was great soul of the Madras non-Brahmin Movement. Just as Shahu in Maharashtra, Dr. Nayar was considered the spearhead of the non-Brahmin Movement in Madras. He was known both in India and England as a fearless leader fighting for the rights of the backward masses in the Madras Presidency. On his return from England in January 1919, Shahu saw him at Bombay and both of them discussed the issues relating to the political rights in the impending reforms in India.[63]

In July, 1920 Shahu met Sir P. Tyagraj Chettiyar at the Karnataka Non-Brahmin social conference in Hubli. The two leaders exchanged ideas of uplifting the backward classes. Thus the Conference established close ties between these two lenders. In his presidential address, Shahu hailed him as a 'great man'.[64]

Next year, Shahu visited Madras in the context of 'Tanjavur Episode.' He was received and hosted by his friend Lord Willingdon the then Governor of Madras. During his stay, Shahu visited the Justice Party office and had discussions on the subjects of common interests there. There, he came to know that the Brahmin-non Brahmin conflict had much more intensity in Madras than in Maharashtra and the Madras non-Brahmins had been taught to despise the Aryan Culture and take pride in calling themselves non-Aryan. [65]

When Shahu died, Sir Chettiyar paid him a glowing tribute: "Though by birth the late Chhatrapati was an aristocrat, being a direct descendant of Shivaji, he was a democrat of democrats and lover of lower orders.... His career was such that he was known as a power to N.B. Movement and to depressed classes. His sole object was to make the N.B. Movement an All India movement." [66]

The British Government showed sympathy with the non-Brahmin movement and at time secretly came to the help of their leaders. For instance, Shahu in February 1918 informed Mr. Vincent, the Head of the Police Department of Bombay Government that the Kolhapur Brahmins had quite resolved to be 'mischievous' at his order to adopt the 'Talati System' on the British line. Mr. Vincent immediately sent a reply, "I note what you say that the Brahmin movement in Kolhapur is apparently coming to a head again. I have given local C.I.D. instructions and Your Highness can rest assured that we will do what we can to keep in touch with the situation. Should I receive the slightest information I will see that it is immediately communicated. Meanwhile if your Highness comes to Bombay I have asked your Diwan to let me know and we will make *pucca bandobust*." [67]

Shahu was in constant touch with his British friends in England. Lord Sydenham, the ex-governor of Bombay and a close friend of Shahu, was the member of House of Lords. He was greatly interested in the politics of Bombay Presidency, especially the struggle between the non-Brahmin Movement and the Maharashtrian Brahmins in the Congress; and had his sympathies with Shahu's role as a supremo of the non-Brahmin movement. In December 1919, he in his letter to Shahu, expressed satisfaction at performance of the non-Brahmin movement and informed him that he had read some matter from his letter regarding the movement, in House of Lords. [68]

However, the sympathies of the British bureaucrats did not yield a desired result. The demand of the a Non-Brahmin Movement was not fulfilled by the Mont-ford Reforms of 1919. Later in 1921, Dr. Ambedkar writes from England to Shahu, "It is to be regretted that no good exponent of the N B. movement was present during the critical period when the Reform Bill was on the anvil. Consequently it became quite an easy task for the enemies of the movement to represent it as only anti-Brahmanism. Its democratic side was ingeniously suppressed so that a distorted view of the same is what is present in the minds of most English people. As the Reforms are a fait accompli few people trouble about the number or nature of factions prevailing in India. Yet to be prepared for the

future we must dig from now. I therefore take every opportunity possible to put every important Englishman I meet into a right frame of mind regarding the inter-relations of social & political problems in India." [69] Dr. Ambedkar knew that his efforts would not bear fruit immediately; but he was hoping that they would not go waste.

Shahu, Communal Representation and the British

Shahu in November 1917 had called on Mr. Montagu at Delhi and urged for the Communal Representation to the backward classes, including the depressed class. Next month, he wrote to Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Bombay, that the backward classes must all be properly represented in the reformed constitution of the Government of India that was under contemplation. He added that he strongly favoured Communal representation down to the untouchables and especially for them. [70]

On July 4, 1918, the Mont-Ford Report on the imminent reforms for India, was published. Shahu found that no separate representation had been recommended to the Marathas. So he, in his detailed letter of August 17 addressed to Mr. Montagu, put forward some specific suggestions for his consideration. He strongly pleaded on the ground of various historical and social reasons for separate representation for the Marathas. He urged that the separate representation might be given to the Marathas only as a necessary evil till they learn to stand on their own legs, for a period of about 22 years or so.[71] It should be noted here that Shahu's demand for the Separate representation for the Marathas was not parochial. The term 'Marathas' included alongwith the caste Marathas, such castes as Kunabi, Mali, Koli, Bhandari, Shimpi, Lohar, Bhoi, Lonari etc. [72]

To Shahu's letter, Mr. Montagu replied in October 1918, that a committee would review the whole question of electrorates and franchise and that the Maratha Community would have the fullest opportunity of representing its views on the subject. [73] Meanwhile, Shahu's friends like Lord Sydenham were doing all they could for supporting the demand of communal Representation for the non-Brahmin community.[74]

On February 17, 1919, Shahu again wrote a letter to Mr. Montagu, urging him emphatically to reconsider the case of the backward classes. He says, "The backward classes unfortunately on account of the social and educational repression of ages unknown and unrealizable to any other part of the world have not the tongue to speak for themselves. They claim your greatest sympathy and consideration. I had no mind to write to you again in this connection but rightly or wrongly a feeling goes aboard that these helpless millions have no champion on the Representation Committee, and so I thought I might crave indulgence to say a word. I have not still come across the reason or arguments which go against the Communal Representation and the advocates of Communal Representation are therefore placed at a great disadvantage." [75]

It is interesting to note that Shahu had applied the principle of Communal representation to Kolhapur Municipality in 1919. He had awarded the separate representation on communal basis to the backward and depressed classes, and enabled them to learn the working of democracy. Earlier in 1918, on the lines of Travancore, he had revived the Village Panchayats on a democratic basis at several villages. Small matters like education, water supply, sanitation were transferred to these Panchayats. Thus Shahu was preparing his subjects to welcome the major step towards Swarajya.[76]

Shahu's concept of Communal Representation was not restricted to a mere representation to backward classes in the Legislative Councils. It had a larger and broader context. He says, "..... People of all castes gaining strength to fulfill their responsibilities in various fields such as industry, education, government service, etc. is what I call communal representation. I think it is my duty to encourage those who are left behind to come to the fore. I extend my hand to pull up my subjects and the downtrodden out of the murk. Parents need not devote attention to their grown-up children capable of self-care. But parents have to care for those who are minor, ignorant, who cannot walk or cannot even stand on their own. Some are to be given helping hand; some are to be carried on shoulders. The parents doing this are supposed to be performing their duty. Accusing them of partiality, only because they do not treat all children equally, would be inhuman. It is with this consideration that I am encouraging those castes that are placed worst."[77]

End of the First Phase of non-Brahmin Movement

The British Parliament, on December 23, 1919, passed the Government of India Act, based on the report of Mr. Montagu. The Act granted constitutional reforms to India which later came to be known as the 'Mont-Ford Reforms'. The British Government had not accepted the demand of the non-Brahmins for separate electrorates, but obliged to reserve a few seats in the provincial Legislative Council. The Madras non-Brahmin community benefited most, obtaining 28 of the total 98 seats. In Bombay, 35 of the total 86 seats were allotted to the rural areas, out of which seven were reserved for non-Brahmins (Marathas and Allied Castes). The Depressed class (untouchables) got two seats.[78]

In November, 1920, the elections to the Legislative Councils were held Non-Brahmin Party contested elections in the reserved as well as general constituencies. S.K. Bole, Anandrao Surve, Kirtivanrao Nimbalkar, Gangaji Kalbhor, Panduragrao Jadhav, Dajirao Vichare etc were elected to the Bombay Legislative Council, while Annasaheb Latthe and Keshavrao Bagade were elected to the Central Legislative Council.[79]

With the formation of the Legislative Councils, the first phase of the non-Brahmin Movement (1917) came to the end. Shahu was fortunate enough to see the performance of the non-Brahmin members, especially the problems of the non-Brahmin community being voiced in the councils. However, his death in May 1922,

gave severe blow to the movement. After him it was leaders like Bhaskarrao Jadhav, Latthe, Mukundrao Patil, Jedhe brother who carried forward the movement, but never again did it get the leader like Shahu who could guide and at times goaded them to observe discipline.

Indian National Congress was also undergoing fundamental changes. With the death of Tilak, his era had ended and that of Gandhi had begun. Gandhi's politics mainly involved the participation of common people of all castes and creeds in the freedom struggle of the Country. Consequently, the Brahminical influence upon the Congress gradually went on diminishing over the decade after 1920. However, the hold of the Maharashtrian Brahmins over the Congress in the Bombay Presidency continued till the end of the decade. In early 1930s majority of the non-Brahmin activist under the leadership of Keshavrao Jedhe entered the Congress.

Naturally it resulted into a rapid decline of the non-Brahmin movement.[80] The movement, which was once started in opposition to the then Nationalists and Congress, now joined the National Freedom Movement and became one with it.

Abolition of Kulkarni Watan and the Revival of Brahmin Activities

The terrorist and political movements of the Kolhapur Brahmins subsided around 1909-10. This was amply reflected in a letter from Lord Lamington, the former Governor of Bombay and a friend of Shahu. On June 2, 1910, he wrote from Scotland, "You are not troubled now, I fancy, with any sedition in your State. Your courageous attitude towards agitators had doubtlessly brought about this desirable result."[81] In the same month, the Session Judge in Kolhapur inflicted on Damu Joshi, a terrorist, seven years imprisonment and Rs. 500/- as fine June 17, 1910.[82] But no repercussions were felt. The situation continued in 1911 and the Government of India was all praise for him. Mr. Charles Cleveland, the Secretary to Home Department Government India, writes from Simala to Shahu, ".....and I know that when I have the honour of speaking with you, it will be with a Ruler who knows more about seditious conspiracies in Western India than any Government Official."[83]

However, Shahu had to face some sporadic disturbances like the Tar Incident of 1914. Shahu had installed in Kolhapur the Statues of the King-Emperor Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. On the midnight of the 14th February 1914, some miscreants tarred the faces of the statues. The incident, which rocked the Kolhapur State, caused wrath of the British Government. The Governor of Bombay expressed his distress, hoping the miscreants be brought to justice. Even the British Parliament got stirred to learn the inglorious happening in India.[84] Shahu was naturally disturbed by this unpleasant episode. He issued a proclamation that an award of Rs. 5000/- would be given to a person providing information and clues regarding the whereabouts of the criminals. However, the Kolhapur police failed to detect the criminals and the Tar episode died out in the course of time.

Except the above incident, no major incident of terrorism or no major outburst of the Brahminical hatred against Shahu had been noticed sine 1910. However, the Brahmin's anti-Shahu activities, both within and without Kolhapur State, were at once revived with Shahu's decision of abolition of Kulkarni Watan.

On June 25, 1918, Shahu issued an order abolishing the age – old Kulkarni Watan and confirming the introduction of Talati System to be effective from next July. He soon, appointed non-Brahmin Talatis in the place of Kulkarnis. As a matter of fact their Watani lands were liable to be resumed by Darbar, for they were no longer in the Service. However, Shahu kindly kept the lands with them with full and absolute rights of ownership.[85] However, the Kulkarnis were not in mood to be obliged. They raged against Shahu for the abolition of their prestigious post in a village.

In his official note, Shahu had painted a vivid picture of Kulkarni's misdoings thus: "The conduct of Kulkarnis was for many years found to be extremely disloyal and in every respect most unsatisfactory. They used every means in their power to influence the poor ryots against me and indeed against the British Government and by virtue of their influential position as village officers, they had exceptional opportunities of doing so. They read the newspaper Kesari to the villagers in the village chavdi and they did their utmost to support the propaganda put forward by the extremists in British territory. They instigated unscrupulous and bitter attacks against me in the newspapers - the Lok Sangraha, Lokshahi Rajkarna, Kesari and other extremist papers. The funds started in the British territory for the furtherance of seditious ends were, I found, collected from poor ignorant ryots of my villages. This was done solely by the Kulkarnis at the instigation of the extremist leaders in British territory.

"As was to be expected under the circumstances mentioned above, these Kulkarnis grossly neglected their legitimate duties and I was so thoroughly dissatisfied with their work that I at last decided to remove them from their posts of village officers and appointed paid talatis to do the work and that system is now working very satisfactorily.

"They had in their possession Government records, and they had a special knowledge of the rights and titles of private proprietors of lands. They had abused their powers as Kulkarnis and had taken undue advantage of their special knowledge. So many instances of fraud and dishonesty played by Kulkarnis were coming before me that I had to appoint a Special Court for trying the cases of their fraud."[86]

In his letter to Mr. Robertson, the Political Secretary to Government of Bombay, Shahu explains the evils of the Kulkarni system more pointedly : "You know what influence the Kulkarni had in me village and why he is satisfied with the paltry amount of *hakdari* he receives as his remuneration. His intrigues bring him a large amount and he has also other illicit ways of making money. He knows that the villagers being ignorant are solely at his mercy. But if they are taught to read and

write, all his influence will be gone. So my recent educational measure to promote education of the masses is naturally looked on with disfavour by him. He also knows how I have been fearlessly helping Government in putting down Brahmin intrigues."[87]

The abolition of Kulkarni Watan was Shahu's master-stroke in the social diplomacy of Maharashtra. It effected a radical positive change in society which was till then under the evil influence of Brahmin supremacy. It was really a great social act, liberating the village life of Kolhapur. Shahu, however, had to pay heavy price for this. Almost the whole Brahmin community in Maharashtra got infuriated and began to curse Shahu as an oppressor. The attacks of the Brahmin papers upon Shahu and his family were renewed with a double vigor and rage. The protest meetings to express support to the Kulkarnis of Kolhapur and malign the image of Shahu in the eyes of the people were arranged in the bastings of the Brahminical influence all over Maharashtra. At a second Conference of Kulkarnis May 1920, at Sankeshwar on the border of Kolhapur, Ad. Dattopant Belvi, a Congress leader from Belgaum assaulted Shahu, "In Kolhapur State no man's wife is safe and no man's property is safe".The Kesari, from Poona, moderated Belvi's statement and substituted the words 'No man's *Abru* (reputation)' for 'No man's wife'. The *Kesari* and another Brahmins paper the *Dnyanprakash* started publishing series of anti-Shahu letters and creating his image as an oppressive ruler.[88]

References and Footnote

1. SSM, p. 67
2. RSSG, p. 135
3. RSMB, pp. 20-21
4. BRAC, Vol. I, pp. 154-158
5. RSC, p. 320
6. RSMB, p. 33
7. RSC, p. 381
8. SCRR, p. 358
9. SCNA, Vol. I, p. 176
10. RSCP, Vol. VIII, Letter No. 67, p. 106
11. RSSG, p. 138
12. SCNA, Vol. II, p. 13
13. RSMB, p. 34
14. RSMB, pp. 34-35
15. RSCP, Vol. VIII, Letter No. 8, pp. 11-12
16. Ibid, Letter No. 208, p. 350
17. Ibid, Letter No. 215, pp. 364-366
18. Ibid, Letter No. 216, pp. 369-370
19. Ibid, Letter No. 225, p. 383
20. Ibid, Letter No. 285, p. 489
21. Ibid, Letter No. 246,p. 413
22. Shahu Papers, Unpublished, Letter No. R – 12783, 19 Jan. 1921
23. CWMJP, pp. XVIII - XIX
24. RSSG, pp. 193-140
25. Ibid, p. 140
26. RSC, p. 320
27. Ibid, p. 320
28. RSSG, pp. 141-142; Ibid, p. 252
29. RSC, pp. 255-256
30. RSSG, pp. 744-745
31. SCNA, Vol. I, p. 174
32. REV, p. 111
33. RSC, p. 451
34. REV, p. 108
35. RSSG, p. 144
36. SCL, p. 261
37. VSM, Vol. II, p. 294
38. RSC, p. 525

39. RSSG, p. 445
40. RSCV, p. 31
41. RSC, p. 309
42. KGBL, p. 57
43. SCL, p. 187
44. Ibid, p. 186
45. Ibid, p. 188-199
46. RSC, p. 380
47. Ibid, p. 477
48. Ibid, p. 477
49. Shahu Papers, Unpublished, Letter No. R - 7
50. Ibid, Letter No. R - 8871
51. Ibid, Dated 2 October 1920
52. Ibid, Letter No. R - 12677
53. PSD, pp. 88-91
54. RSCP, p. 165
55. Ibid, pp. 166-167
56. SSM, p. 446
57. SCL, p. 154
58. VSM, Vol. II, pp. 277-279
59. RSSG, p. 168
60. Ibid, p. 169
61. SCL, pp. 233-234
62. RSSG, p. 169
63. RSC, pp. 233-234
64. RSSG, p. 170
65. Ibid, p. 170
66. Ibid, p. 725
67. RSCP, Vol. VII, Letter No. 26, 27, pp. 37-38
68. RSC, p. 410
69. RSCP, Vol. IX, Letter No. 159, p. 292
70. RSCP, Vol. VII, Letter No. 384, p. 524
71. Ibid, Vol. VIII, Letter No. 121, pp. 195 - 202
72. PSD, p. 369
73. RSCP, Vol. VII, Letter No. 191, p. 242
74. Ibid, pp. 229-230, Letter No. 185
75. Ibid, p. 349, Letter No. 272
76. SCRR, p. 413
77. RSSG, p. 176
78. Ibid, p. 172
79. VSM, Vol. II, p. 295

80. RSSG, p. 172
81. RSCP, Vol. XI, Letter No. 20, p. 32
82. Ibid, Letter No. 23, p. 36
83. Ibid, Vol. VI, Letter No. 109, p. 144
84. SCRR, p. 233
85. Ibid, p. 323
86. Ibid, p. 324
87. Ibid, p. 324-325
88. RSC, pp. 438-439, 491

Chapter VIII
CONCLUSIONS

The British conquered and subjugated our Country and established themselves as a Paramount Power in India. It was not a story of a decade or so. It was a product of British political and diplomatic endeavour of more than a century. Before the outbreak of the rebellion of 1857, the East India Company had definitely established Paramount control over the Indian States with the help of treaties imposed on them. Though the British Paramountcy was a reality, it had no basis in the treaties. Hence the British were a de facto Paramount Power. After the revolt they assumed the position of de jure Paramount Power. With the historic proclamation of Queen Victoria they started a process of consolidation of Paramountcy. They had adopted a dual policy of conciliating the States on one hand and weakening them in gradual process on the other.

For materializing their policy the British enunciated 'One charge theory' in which the whole India was placed under one Paramount Authority of the Crown.

Thus the Indian States were transformed into feudatories of the Crown. The subsequent years witnessed the Government of India shouldering a new responsibility of setting right the abuses in the States. For that purpose, they put forward the 'Doctrine of Interference' in the States. They officially declared that the Crown had accepted the responsibility of Paramount obligation of protecting the people of India from the oppression of the native Princes. The British Paramountcy reached its pinnacle of glory in the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon. According to him the Princes were merely the agents of the Paramount power in the administration of their States. He declared that the sovereignty of the Crown was everywhere unchallenged.

British Government, however, had to change their policy, with the rise of nationalism and the consequent growth of the Freedom Movement in India. They saw in the Princes their allies with unswering loyalty to the crown. Consequently, they launched 'The Laissez – fair Policy.' In other words it was the Non-Intervention Policy, which, in turn, expected from the Princes their sincere help in their fight against the national freedom movement. The Congress – Muslim League pact of 1916 and Montagu's Announcement of 1917 further compelled the Government to rely more and more on the Princes as their trustworthy and loyal friends and allies.

All these factors led to the establishment of the Chamber of Princes in 1921. Shahu had taken keen interest in its formation and later on, he was deeply involved in its working till his death in 1922.

The Kolhapur State was established by the Maratha Queen Tarabai in 1710. It was during the regime of Queen Jijabai, the daughter-in-law of Tarabai, that

the Kolhapur State first came into contact with the British. It was in the form of confrontation between Kolhapur Chhatrapati & the British that took place in 1765. An overview of their relations between 1765 to 1857 shows us that the British had slowly tried to bring the State under control during the period of about 100 years, During this period in all five treaties were concluded between Kolhapur State and the British. Consequently the British developed a firmhold over the State right from the period of Queen Jijabai of Kolhapur. As the hold was strengthened, the power and position of the Chhatrapati were weakened. It was reduced to the namesake, in Buvasaheb's reign.

Thus the Marathas could not comprehend the true nature and growing political & military power of the British. Although Western education, he scientific spirit, military superiority and ambitious imperialism etc. were the chief factors responsible for the growth of the British Power. The conservative attitude of the Chhatraptis, their lack of vision and the lack of unity among the Marathas were also responsible for the decline of their power and prestige.

During the course of the mutiny of 1857, Babasaheb Chhatrapati remained loyal to the British. This act of loyalty saved the Kolhapur State from extinction. It should be noted that before the outbreak of the mutiny Kolhapur State had already accepted the imperial claims of the British Paramountcy, under the obligations of the various treaties. Now the State had to adjust itself to the changing policies of the British and accept their overlordship. If we review the relations between the British and the Kolhapur State for 26 years from 1857 onwards, it can be concluded that the British made some basic changes in the State administration, as well as in the Darbar practices and the rights of the Chhatrapatis during the reign of Babasaheb. These changes were confirmed by the treaty of 1862. It was mandatory for the Chhatrapati to observe the treaty obligations. The political authority of the British was well settled in the Kolhapur State during the reign of Babasaheb and further stabilized as a suzerain power till the advent of Shahu.

The British Government was very cautious and alert while selecting and grooming Chhatrapatis for their role of head of the State. They expected the Raja of Kolhapur to be a wise, experienced and responsible ruler, keen on the welfare of his people.

Shahu, at the age of 10, was adopted by Anandibai the Dowager Queen of Kolhapur in 1884 and was invested with full administrative powers by the British in 1894. During this period the British as a Paramount power, maintained law and order in the State through the agency of Regency Council and at the same time they saw to it that Shahu got proper education and administrative training for assuming the role of a ruler. They expected Shahu to be an enlightened Raja who would look after the welfare of his subjects and be a loyal feudatory to the British Crown who would help them in maintaining and strengthening their position as an Imperial Power in India.

Shahu consolidated his power during the first phase of his reign i.e. from 1894 to 1900. With the acquisition of reins of power in 1894, the long anguishing period of minority regimes ended. The pre-Shahu period had witnessed a substantial decrease in the power and prestige of the Chhatrapati. The British Political Agent and officers appointed by him had the virtual control over the administration of the State. The State bureaucracy comprised of the Europeans, Anglo- Indians, and the Brahmins. Not a single non-Brahmin officer was found in the administration. After his accession to the power, Shahu dissolved the Regency Council and created the Council of Administration in its place and subsequently appointed the qualified non-Brahmin persons to the higher posts in the State. Soon the Europeans and non- Marathi officers left the state service of their own accord and went away.

In the first phase of his reign, Shahu had to face two great calamities i.e. famine and epidemic of plague simultaneously. To save the subjects from them was the Herculean task which testified the qualities and abilities of Shahu as a competent and efficient ruler. His achievements in his enduring work earned him compliments even from the British Government.

While consolidating his internal administrations, Shahu had to experience one of the distressful events in his life i.e. the Wray poisoning case in 1899. Fortunately, the British Government came to the help of Shahu and the sense of justice prevailed eventually. He got away unscathed.

Shahu knew the strength and power of the British Paramountcy. Hence he had cultivated a very cordial relations with the British. His loyalty to the Crown was soon awarded with an honour of G.C.S.I. and bestowal of the 'Power of life and death' upon him. Again he was honoured by the Crown with a dignified title of 'Maharaja.' All these events proved his excellent relations with the Paramount Power.

By the end of 19th Century, Shahu had to undergo a very painful social ordeal in form of Vedokta Controversy. The Brahmins in Kolhapur refused to acknowledge Shahu's right to perform religious rites in accordance with the Vedic Mantras, thereby branding him and his fellow Marathas as Sudras. The Brahmins, out of Kolhapur especially from Pune and Wai, followed the suit under the leadership of Tilak. This infuriated the entire class of the non- Brahmins. It also culminated into a social turmoil which eventually led to awakening of non-Brahmin community regarding the principles of social justice and equality.

In the beginning, the conflict between Shahu and the Brahmins was limited to the Kolhapur territory only. But soon it spread like wildfire in Maharashtra engaging the non-Brahmin community on one hand and the Brahmin community on the other. Shahu confiscated the *watan* of the Rajopadhye, the chief priest of the Royal family, who had refused to perform the religious rites according to the Vedic mantras.

The Rajopadhye, in his turn, seeking his grievance to be redressed, appealed to the British authorities, right from the Political Agent in Kolhapur to the Governor General in Calcutta. At every stage, he met with failure. Eventually he surrendered to Shahu and acknowledged the latter's right to the Vedic Mantras. The Shankaracharya and Brahmin community in Kolhapur followed the Rajopadhye. Thus the Vedokta Controversy ended with victory on Shahu's side. The British Government upheld the claims of Shahu to the Vedokta against the Brahmins of Kolhapur.

Shahu's creation of the post of Kshatra – jagatguru and establishment of Vedic School for the non- Brahmins were clearly the logical steps towards religious freedom.

While Shahu was facing the Vedotka controversy, he had to fight against the Terrorist activities centered in his State. Majority of the Terrorists came from the Brahmin community and they had secret support of the followers of Tilak, like Prof. Vijapurkar who indulged in some kind of political activities in the Kolhapur State.

The genisis of the Freedom Movement in the Kolhapur State could be traced back to the formation of the Shivaji Club in 1893. However, in course of time the Club became exclusively the organization of the Brahmin Terrorists, having close connection with Tilak group in Poona.

Soon the outburst of the Vedokta Controversy changed the entire scenario of social life in Kolhapur. Almost entire Brahmin community at the instigation of Tilak rose in opposition against Shahu on the Vedokta issue. As a result, the terrorist activities increased in the Kolhapur State. Tilak never openly espoused the cause of the terrorists, but he had secret links with them. Besides, his followers like Prof. Vijapurkar, Rashingkar were conducting the Freedom Movement under the banner of *Swarajya, Swadeshi* and *Rashtriya Shikshan*, and demanding the right to form a Representative Assembly in Kolhapur. Both the Terrorists and the Political agitators like Vijapurkar had close relations and mutual understanding.

There were many Deccan States in India. Most of them were the Brahmin States. But nowhere in those States had the terrorists formed their organizations as they did in the Kolhapur State. Thus the freedom movement in the Kolhapur State was not in conformity with that of the rest of the country. Terrorists and political agitators considered both the British and Shahu as their enemies and hence their activities were targeted at both of them.

As an Indian Prince, Shahu had to remain loyal and pay allegiance to the British. He was supposed to co-operate them in suppressing the activities of both the Terrorists and Political agitators. Accordingly, he did co-operate with the British. But at heart he was a patriot. So he is found helping the great revolutionary of his times, Aurobindo Ghose and even Tilak, his so-called enemy.

Shahu could not participate in election politics in British India. However, he was greatly interested and involved in the political activities of the non-Brahmins in Maharashtra. On the eve of the Mont-Ford Reforms, he transformed the non-Brahmin Social Movement into the non-Brahmin Political Movement. Thus he was the founder of the Non-Brahmin Party in Maharashtra. He urged the British Government that the Marathas and their allied castes like Mali, Koli etc should be given separate representation in the Legislative Councils. However, his demand was not accepted and the Marathas and allied casted were only awarded a few reserved posts in the Provincial Legislative Council. The Non-Brahmin Party Candidates contested the elections of the Provincial as well as Central Legislative Councils. Some of them got elected and entered the Councils. Shahu was fortunate enough to see the performance of the non-Brahmin members, especially the problems of the non-Brahmin classes being voiced in the Councils.

While misinterpretation his statement regarding the rights of Swarajya of his subjects, the Tilakites leveled a serious charge of betrayal of freedom movement against Shahu. Describing this as a false allegation, Shahu forcefully hit back stating that he was not against giving right of swarajya to his subjects. But before conferring such rights, his subjects should be provided with primary education at least up to IV standard. Otherwise, such rights would fall in the hands of minorityelites i.e. the Brahmins.

Shahu's concept of freedom was much broader than that of Tilak and his followers. It was fundamentally radical, in nature touching all the aspects of social life. Thus his concept of freedom comprises of the social and political freedom. Tilakites were fighting for the political rights; but the backward classes were not prepared for the application of those rights. This would, Shahu thought, certainly lead to the establishment of oligarchy in the disguise of democracy. Shahu could have easily gained popularity as a great patriot in the nationalist camp of the Brahmins had he not championed the cause of the backward classes or had he not devoted his energies to their upliftment with the help of British. While co-operating with the British Government he wanted to implement his broarder concept of freedom at the cost of this being branded as a traitor to swarajya.

As for the Non-cooperation Movement of Gandhi, it should be noted that Shahu was under obligation of the British Paramount Power to co-operate with them in opposing and suppressing the Movement. However, he had reverence for Gandhi at heart. In one of his speeches, he had described him as an *Avatari* person !

Thus Shahu, as a progressive ruler and a great social revolutionary, could not be against the national freedom movement of the country. But he had to play his role not as defender of political freedom but as champion of social liberty and social justice and that too within the given framework of the British Empire. Some times, he is found co-operating and collaborating the British Government against the Brahmin political agitators. But it was partly because of the obligation of

his being a vassal Prince under the British Paramount Power and partly because of the vilifying activities of character assassination of his person and his family members.

With the growth of the National Freedom Movement in India, especially in 1910s, the British Paramount Power began to feel a sense of insecurity and isolation. Consequently, they started wooing the Indian Princes, their long time 'Friends' and 'Allies' in India. The Viceroy of India was obliged to convent the periodical Conferences of the Princes at Delhi and seek their advice in the affairs relating to the Indian States as well as British India. The British Government seemed to have acknowledge fact that the princes were really the bastions of their Paramount Power in India.

Shahu had taken keen interest in study of the Princes relations with the British Government. Moreover, he had an inner urge to play a role of the Princes' leader at the national level. Hence, he took active part in the deliberations at the Princes' Conferences. He not only attended their sessions, but also presented his studied Notes on the various subjects ranging from the problems of Indian Agriculture to the establishment of Tribunal to solve the problems of the Native States.

In addition to this, he championed the cause of the smaller States and urged the Government to bring them in the mainstream of the Native States in India, by allowing them representation at the Conferences and later at the Chamber of Princes.

Shahu was so much deeply interested in the formation of the Chamber of Princes that he had prepared a 'Draft Constitution of the Chamber' and circulated its copies to the Government and his brother – Princes in India. The Government seemed to have appreciated his Draft Constitution and accepted most of the points embodied in it. Though he was not successful in his mission of securing appropriate representation of the smaller chiefs in the chamber of Princes, he continued his fight for that till the end of his life.

Both the social and political movements in 19th Century were direct result of contacts of the western culture and education, brought and spread by the British in our country. The social movements were aimed at freeing our society from evil traditions and beliefs and awakening the people to be modern in their outlook. The social movements were followed by the political movements which were ment for securing the political rights, the process that eventually led to the freedom of the country.

There were two major social movements in the Kolhapur State in the times of Shahu. Those were the Arya Samaj and the Satya Shodhak Samaj. Both were patronized and encouraged by Shahu. He was introduced to the Arya Samaj in 1902 when the Vedokta Controversy had reached its peak. Shahu was attracted towards the Arya Samaj because it acknowledged the right of every Hindu to Vedas,

irrespective of his *Varna,* Castes or sex. Again the Samaj declared a war against the caste discrimination and untouchability. Shahu had forcefully been fighting against these social evils.

Arya Samaj was established by Shahu in Kolhapur with the help of Swami Paramanand and soon a school and a Gurukul were also started. Later, in 1919, he handed over Rajaram Highschool and Rajaram College, two renowned institutions of Kolhapur to the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha from U.P. Loyalty to the British and Kolhapur Darbar was the prime condition laid down in the agreement with the Sabha.

The Arya Samaj had two factions. The first was loyal to the British and the second was participating in the national freedom movement. As a vassal ruler under the British Paramountcy, it was but natural that Shahu had alighed himself to the first faction. He was an ardent follower of the Arya Samaj and confident that the Samaj alone could break down the Brahmin autocracy in the country. He had dreamt that it would not only spread over India and become a national religion, but spread over Europe and America and play a role of a world religion.

In times of Shahu, there were four major social organizations in the Bombay Presidency. They were the Prarthana Samaj, Arya Samaj, Theosophy and Satyashodhak Samaj. The first three organizations were confined to the upper classes of the society and could hardly think of any radical change in existing social framework. But it was Satyashodhak Samaj, founded by Mahatma Phule ,that had adopted a mission of freeing the *shudras* and *Atishudras* from the bondage of Brahmin autocracy.

So far Kolhapur State was concerned, the Satyashodhak Movement was the main movement of the masses. Though Shahu was follower of the Arya Samaj, he not only patronized the Satyashodhak Samaj but also revived it by providing assistance in form of men, money and material. Though almost all contemporary Satya Samajists acknowledged him as a main architect of resurrection of the Satyashodhak Movement, Shahu himself had to declare that he had been against the movement and that he had nothing to do with it. This was because of the fact that Shahu, as a ruler of a native state, could not control the activities of the Movement which has spread in different regions in British India regions. He could not take the moral responsibility of the deeds of the Samajists in British territory.

The freedom movement in the Bombay Presidency was predominantly led by the Brahmins who viewed the British as their enemy. And to the British, the Brahmins were their prime antagonists. The Satyashodak Samajists were fighting against the Brahmanical autocracy. Thus the British and Samajists had one common enemy i.e. the Brahmin class. Naturally, the British had sympathies with the Satyashodhak Movement. But they could not show it openly. They had to pretend that they were neutral in the social matters of India.

The British sympathies to the Satyashodhak movement was in comformity with their policy of 'Divide and rule'. The Samajists also knew it but they had not choice. They followed the basic age-old principle of Politics i.e. enemy's enemy is a friend. Thus it was a struggle between the British and Samajists on one side and the Brahmins on the other. Each one of them had their own objectives to be achieved at the cost of others.

The Princely State of Kolhapur was symbol of the Maratha Power founded by Shivaji the great in the 17th century. Shahu was proud his lineage and conscious the spirit of freedom cherished by Shivaji

Due to long period of minority regimes Kolhapur State was backward and undeveloped. Powers and position of the Chhatrapati had been quite degraded. Many restrictions had been imposed upon Kolhapur Chhatrapati by the treaty of 1862. The orthodox Brahmin had posed challenge and the activities the nationalist and terrorist groups had often jeopardised. Shahu's position in the diplomatic circles. Such situation did not prevail in any other Sourthern Maratha Country States. Shahu, in order to initiate the process of modernization in his state and also to create new legalisation social order, wisely secured support of the progressive British ruler. He cultivated cordial relations with the British officers, Governors, Viceroys and his European friends and well wishers. He adopted such attitude towards national freedom movement and social reform movement which won't harm his interests nor would affect his relations with the British Paramount Power in any way. However his nation building activities and humanitarian work made him a nationalist of high order. Although he was subservient to the British Paramount Power Shahu made ceaseless efforts to annul the unjust provisions of the treaty of 1862 and regain the lost power and position of the Maratha Chhatrapati. He was quite successful in his endeavours to reclaim control over his feudatory jagirdars, power of life and death as well as the residuary jurisdiction. Shahu maintained his relations with the British Paramount Power through both the official and non-official channels and his success lay in the skillful handling of the relations.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Unpublished

Shahu Papers : Unpublished R. 6901, Shahu Research Centre (hencefort SRC), Kolhapur

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 6914, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 6918 – 19, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 6921, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 6923, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 6929, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 9437-39, 15th April 1919, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 11693, 20th Sep. 1920, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 12555-57, 6th Nov. 1920, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 7494- 24th June 1919, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 6637-38, 12th Nov. 1917,SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 5766-67, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 8871, 8th Feb. 1919, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Dated 2 Oct. 1920, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 12677, 14 Dec. 1920, SRC

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 11886-87, 8 June, 1920

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 6901

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 6910

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 12783, 19 Jan. 1921

Shahu Papers : Unpublished Letter No. R – 7

Published -

Deshpande P.N. (ed.), Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharajanchi Patre, First ed., Dhule, 1983.

Dhatavkar Bhaskar (ed.), Patil Shamrao (collector), Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapatinche Nivadak Adesh, Vol. I, Mumbai, 1988;

Jadhav B.B. (ed.), Rajarshi ShriShahu Maharajanchi Bhashane, Kolhapur, 1971.

Jamkhedkar A.P. (ed.), Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapatinche Nivadak Adesh, Vol. II, Mumbai, 1989.

Pawar A.G. (ed.), Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati Papers, Vol. I, 1884 – 1894, Shahu Research Institute, Kolhapur, 1978.

Pawar Appasaheb (ed.), Jijabaikalin Kagadpatre, First ed., Shivaji University, Kolhapur, 1978.

Sangave Vilas (ed.), Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati Papers, 1906-1909 A.D., Foundation Of Development Projects and Rise of Sedition, SRI, 1992.
Sangave Vilas (ed.), Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati Papers, 1920-22 A.D., Installation of Kshatra Jagadguru And End of an Epoch, SRI, Kolhapur, 2005
Sangave Vilas, Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati Papers, 1900-1905 A.D., New Government Policies, SRI, 1988.
Sangave Vilas, Khane B.D. (ed.), Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati Papers, Vol. II, 1894 – 1900 A.D. EarlyAdministrative Reforms, Shahu Research Institute (henceforth SRI) Kolhapur, 1983.
Sangave Vilas, Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati Papers, 1900-1905 A.D., Vedokta Controversy, SRI, 1985.
Sangave Vilas, Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati Papers, 1910-1913 A.D., Initiation of Socio-Economic Movements, SRI, 1994.
Sangave Vilas, Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati Papers, 1914 – 1917 A.D., Implementation Of Socio-Political Schemes, SRI, 1997.
Sangave Vilas, Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati Papers, 1918-119 A.D., Impetus to Social Legislation And Non-Brahmin Movements, SRI, 2001.
Thomas R. Hughes (ed.), Compiled by Major D.C. Graham, Statistical Report on the Principality of Kolhapur, Selections from the Records of the Bombay Government VIII, Printed for Government at the Bombay Education Society Press, 1854
Treaties And Agreements Concluded Between The British Government And The Kolhapur State Since The Year 1766 A.D. And Kharitas Bearing On The Subjects, Printed at the S.V. Press, Kolhapur, 1904.

Secondary Sources

Unpublished –

Babar B.S., Life and Work of Bhaskarrao jadhav (Ph. D. Thesis), 1992
Jadhav Archana, Kolhapuratil Arya Samajache Karya, 2001
Kamble M.L, Diwan Bahadur Sir. R.V. Sabnis his life and Work (M. Phil Dissertation) 1990
Kaul Ranjana, Abhyankar G.R : Populer Struggle in the Princely States 1875-1935 (Ph.D Thesis), Pune University, 1996
Khane B.D, Shri Shahu : A Study of Socio – political Reforms 1884-1922 (Ph.D Thesis), 1978
Nalawade M.D, Shahu Chhatrapati of Kolhapur: A Social Revolutionary 1874-1922 (Ph. D Thesis), 1978
Nalwade V.N., Life And Career of Keshavrao Jadhe, (Ph. D Thesis), 1990

Rankhambe N.R., Life and Career of Shankarrao More (Ph. D Thesis), 2007

Published -

Ashton S.R., British Policy Towards The Indian States, 1905-1939, Cruzon Press, Great Britain, 1982

Bagal Madhavrao (ed.), Hanterkar Khanderao Gopalrao Bagal Yanche Nivdak Lekh, Kolhapur, 1974.

Copland Ian, The Princes of India in the Endgame of Empire 1917-1947, Cambridge University Press, 1999

Dhruva A.B. (ed.), Shree Madanmohan Malaviya Commomerative Volume, Benaras Hindu University, 1932.

Dodwell H.H., V.D. Mahajan (eds.), The Cambridge History of India, Vol. VI, S. Chand & Co. Delhi, 1932

Garge S.M., Karveer Riyasat, Third ed., Kolhapur, 2003.

Jadhav Ramesh, Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati : Vad Aani Vastav, Kolhapur, 1992.

Keer Dhananjay, Rajarshi Shahu Chhatrapati, First ed., Popular Prakashan, Mumbai, 1979.

Keer Dhananjay, Shahu Chhatrapati a Royal Revolutionary, Bombay, 1976.

Kelkar Manohar Mahadev, Samagra Kelkar Vandmay II, Lokmany Khand, Pune, 1938

Kelkar N.C., Lokmanya Tilak Yanche Charitra, Vol. I, Pune, 1923.

Khairmode C.B., Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar Charitra, Vol – I, Forth ed., Pune, 1992. Vol. II, Pune, 1991

Latthe A.B., Memoirs of H.H. Shri Shahu Chhatrapti Maharaja of Kolhapur, Vol. I-II, The Times Press, Bombay, 1924

Latthe A.B., Shrimtchhatrapati Shahu Maharaj Yanche Charitra, Kolhapur, 1925.

Lee-Warner William, The Native States of India, Tulsi Publication, New Delhi, 1979

Lee-Warner William, The Protected Princes of India, Macmillan and Co., London, 1891

Mahajan V.D., British Rule In India And After, S. Chand & Co., Delhi, 1961.

Copland Ian, The British Raj and the Indian Princes, Orient Longman, Bombay, 1987.

Majumadar R.C. (ed.), British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance, Part I, Vol. IX, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1970.

Malgonkar Manohar, Chhatrapatis of Kolhapur, First ed., Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1971.

Mujumdar R.C. (ed.), Struggle for Freedom, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1969

Onions C.T. (ed.), The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles, Oxford Press, U.K., 1959

Panikkar K.M., The Evolution of British Policy Towards Indian States 1774-1858, Mittal Publications, Delhi, 1986

Patil P.G. (ed.), Collected Works of Mahatma Jotirao Phule, Vol. II, Bombay, 1991, pp. XVIII – XIX.

Patil Pandurang Sitaram, Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, Mumbai, 1989

Pawar Jaysingrao (ed.), Rajarshi Shahu Smarak Granth, Maharashtra Itihas Prabodhini, Kolhapur, 2001.

Phadke Y.D. (ed.), Mahatma Phule Samagra Vanmay, Mumbai, 1991

Phadke Y.D., Shahu Chhatrapati Aani Lokmanya, Pune, 1982.

Phadke Y.D., Visavya Shatakatil Maharashtra, 1901-1914, Vol. I, Pune, 1989; Vol. II, Pune, 1989.

Rao V.D. (ed.), Studies in Indian History, Dr. A.G. Pawar Felicitaion Volume, Kolhapur, 1968.

Singh Nihal, The Kings and Indian Allies, The Raja and Their India, London, 1918

Tophkhane V.D., Rajarshi ShriShahu Chhatrapati Yanche Antarang, Kolhapur, 1963.

West E.W., Diary of the Rajah of Kolhapur, 1872

Wyld Henry Cecil, Eric Patridge (eds.), Webster Universal Dictionary, Bombay, 1970

Yedekar Sham, Rajarshi – Ek Vyaktidarshan, Kolhapur.

News Papers and Periodicals

Kesari, Pune

The Times of India, Bombay.